DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 135 832	TM 006 057

AUTHOR	Faunce, R.W.; Walen, Tracey
TITLE	The Minneapolis Accountability Project: 1972-1976. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Minneapolis Public Schools, Minn. Dept. of Research and Evaluation.
PUB DATE	Jan 77
NOTE	79p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Advisory Committees; *Citizen Participation; *Community Involvement; Discipline; *Educational Accountability; *Educational Programs; Program Effectiveness; *Program Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	*Minneapolis Accountability Project; Minnesota (Minneapolis)

ABSTRACT

The Minneapolis Accountability Project was an effort of the Minneapolis Public Schools to provide greater accountability to the public by helping citizens evaluate school programs. Citizens' study groups were provided with staff to help them in a year-long study of a topic selected by a citizen's advisory board. Study committees met weekly throughout the school year and made recommendations to the school board in the spring. Followup activities sought to promote implementation of the recommendations. The project operated from September 1972 through June 1976 and produced six studies: Pupil Progress Reporting, Use of Teachers' Skills, Basic Skills, Curriculum Development Procedures, Community Participation, and School Discipline. This report summarizes the project's four years. Emphasis is placed on the final year since the first three years have been described in earlier reports. An attempt is made to assess the project's impact. Participants were surveyed, study committee chairpersons assessed their committee's impact, state and local school officials gave their views, and newspaper reports of the project were reviewed. An independent evaluator hired by the state evaluated the project. Finally, an estimate of the status of the 95 recommendations made by study committees is given. Reactions of participants, the press, the state funding agent, the independent evaluator, and the superintendent were favorable. However, implementation of recommendations varied with the topic, and committee chairpersons' views reflected this variation. All chairpersons, however, felt the Accountability Project itself was worthwhile. (Author/RC)

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Planning and Support Services Division

Minneapolis Public Schools

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Minneapolis Accountability Project
1972-1976
Final Report

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Tracey Walen, Project Coordinator

Ideas expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Minneapolis Public School Administration nor the Minneapolis School Board.

January 1977
C-76-38

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THE MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT: 1972-1976 FINAL REPORT

SUMMARY

See Pages

The Minneapolis Accountability Project was an effort of the Minneapolis Public Schools to provide greater accountability to the public by helping citizens evaluate school programs. Citizens' study groups were provided with staff to help them in a year-long study of a topic selected by a citizen's advisory board. 1

Study committees met weekly throughout the school year and made recommendations to the school board in the spring. Followup activities sought to promote implementation of the recommendations. 2

The project operated from September 1972 through June 1976 and produced six studies: Pupil Progress Reporting, Use of Teachers' Skills, Basic Skills, Curriculum Development Procedures, Community Participation, and School Discipline.

This report summarizes the project's four years. Emphasis is placed on the final year since the first three years have been described in earlier reports. 4

An attempt is made to assess the project's impact. Participants were surveyed, study committee chairpersons assessed their committee's impact, state and local school officials gave their views, and newspaper reports of the project were reviewed. An independent evaluator hired by the state evaluated the project. Finally, an estimate of the status of the 95 recommendations made by study committees is given. 17

Reactions of participants, the press, the state funding agent, the independent evaluator, and the superintendent were favorable. However, implementation of recommendations varied with the topic, and committee chairpersons' views reflected this variation. All chairpersons, however, felt the Accountability Project itself was worthwhile. 17-34

Although the project ended in June 1976, some of its activities continue. State legislation requiring community involvement in planning, evaluation and reporting of educational programs ensures that additional recommendations will be implemented. Recently, the school board formally accepted the recommendations of the Discipline Committee--with only minor changes. 38

An attempt is made to identify the unique features of the project. Benefits derived from the project are described. Finally, some recommendations are made for school districts which may be considering a similar project. 40

Funding for the Minneapolis Accountability Project was provided by the State Council on Quality Education for the first three years and by the Minneapolis School Board for the fourth, and last, year. A severe budget crunch in the school district appears to have been the major reason for the project's discontinuation.

* * *

January 1977

Research and Evaluation Department

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THE MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT: 1972-1976
FINAL REPORT

The Minneapolis Accountability Project was an effort of the Minneapolis Public Schools to provide greater accountability to the public by helping citizens evaluate school programs. Citizens' study groups--comprised of all citizens who wished to participate--were provided with staff to help them in their intensive study of school topics selected by a citizens' advisory panel.

Study committees met weekly throughout the school year and presented recommendations to the school board in the spring. Followup activities sought to promote implementation of the recommendations.

The project operated from September 1972 through June 1976. Six studies were completed: *Pupil Progress Reporting*, *Use of Teachers' Skills*, *Basic Skills*, *Curriculum Development Procedures*, *Community Participation*, and *School Discipline* (Minneapolis Accountability Project, 1973a, 1973b, 1974a, 1974b, 1975, 1976).[1]

Funds for the first three years were provided by the State of Minnesota's Council on Quality Education. These funds averaged about $29,000 each year. The Minneapolis School Board provided $20,000 for the fourth and final year.

This report summarizes the project's four years. Emphasis is placed on the final year, since the first three years were described in previous publications. An attempt is made to assess the impact of the project.

ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT

The proposal to establish the Minneapolis Accountability Project was developed by the Research and Evaluation Department of the Minneapolis Public Schools. This proposal stemmed from the observation that most formal evaluations of school programs conducted by the department lacked community involvement. The purpose of the project was to provide greater public accountability for educational programs through community evaluation.

The proposal was submitted to the Minnesota Council on Quality Education (CQE), an arm of the State Department of Education, which funds innovative, cost-effective approaches to education. The Accountability Project addressed itself to a number of categories described by CQE as appropriate for funding:

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[1] References, shown in parentheses, are listed on page 69.

...Effective utilization of community personnel and resources;

...Developing model personnel policies and procedures and new staffing concepts;

...Assessment and evaluation of education programs;

...Effective dissemination of education information; and

...Research and testing of new concepts of educational efficiency, effectiveness and cost benefits.

The council made three annual grants to the Minneapolis Accountability Project from September 1, 1972 through June 30, 1975.

Details of the development of the project and its first three years of operation have been reported (Faunce & Hively, 1973; Hively & Faunce, 1974, 1975).

Although project details are given in these reports, a brief review of how the project operated is given here so that the reader may view the new information for 1975-76 in perspective.

ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT OPERATIONS: A BRIEF REVIEW

The Accountability Project may be viewed as having three major components: An advisory board, citizens' study committees, and a paid staff.

The advisory board, which included from 11 to 19 members over the four years, actually operated as a powerful steering committee. The board selected staff, determined which topics would be studied, appointed the study committee chairpersons, arbitrated study committee disputes, reviewed the final reports, and established criteria for the composition of subsequent advisory boards. The board also attempted to raise funds for continuing the project after the initial three-year grant elapsed.

Citizens' study committees consisted of all citizens who were willing to meet weekly for six or seven months to study the educational topic selected by the advisory board. Advertisements in the personal columns of the newspapers proved to be one of the effective methods of recruiting citizens for these committees. Voting members of these committees ranged from 32 to 56 members.

Study committees met for 2½-hour evening sessions to hear speakers, review resource materials, discuss findings, and make recommendations. Two committees conducted their own surveys.

Despite great diversity of opinion--and many spirited discussions--none of the six study reports contained a minority report, although that option was available to members.

The staff consisted of two persons hired to provide service to the committees. The project coordinator served as liaison for the advisory board, the study committees, and the school administration. Organizing meetings, selecting speakers, finding and preparing resource materials, attending all meetings and preparing and distributing minutes were functions of the coordinator. Additionally, writing committee reports, preparing news releases and administering the project office were coordinator duties.

An assistant coordinator served in a clerical role, but also provided accounting and research services.

The staff, hired as independent contractors by the school board, maintained a rented, non-school office for the first three years of the project.

Lines of communications between the project and the school district are shown in Exhibit 1, page 5. Routine communications between project staff and the school administration were sent to the director of research, who was, nominally, the project director and who also served as a non-voting member of the project's advisory board. The director of research was also responsible for the project's budget administration. (The project director was an unpaid position. He was designated as project director since he had initiated the proposal and because the school district was the grant recipient. Daily operations were directed by the contracted project coordinator.) Many informal communications between project staff and school administrators also took place as the coordinator sought speakers, resources and clarification of issues. Formal communications, usually the presentation of the study committee reports, travelled from the chairpersons of the advisory board and the study committees to the school board.

In brief, citizens--assisted by a staff hired by the school board--met weekly for six or seven months to study and make recommendations on an educational topic selected by a citizens' advisory board. The citizens' study committee then reported its recommendations to the school board.

The next section describes the project's operations for 1975-76. The topic studied by the citizens' committee was School Discipline.

ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT OPERATIONS IN 1975-76: SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

How did the Accountability Project operate in 1975-76? What changes were made in its procedures? This section attempts to answer these questions.

Various aspects of the project are reviewed: the advisory board, the study committee, staffing, relationship to the Minneapolis Public Schools, budget, and dissemination.

THE 1975-76 ADVISORY BOARD

The 1975-76 advisory board consisted of 19 members and the project director who attended meetings as a non-voting member. The board met 11 times. It was made up of 8 males and 11 females. The racial distribution was 11 Whites, 4 Blacks, 1 Native American, 2 Chicanos and 1 Asian American. Five members lived in the North Administrative Area of the school district, four lived in the East Area, five lived in the West Area, and four lived in Southeast Minneapolis. Two members were high school students.

Selection of Members

Eight criteria for membership on the advisory board were established by the 1974-75 advisory board.

1. The chairperson of the evaluation committee should be a member of the board.
2. The project director should be an ex-officio, non-voting member.
3. Members of the board should be elected as individuals, not as organizational representatives.
4. Members should be elected for maximum 3 year terms.
5. One-third of the board in any year should consist of new members.
6. There should be no more than two board of education employees sitting on the board.
7. The board should strive for balanced representation on the basis of sex, race, geographic location and a variety of viewpoints.
8. The board should consist of 19 voting members including the committee chairperson.

The 1974-75 advisory board chairperson appointed a five-member nominating committee in June 1975. This committee submitted a slate of 15 nominees. Six new members were needed. A discussion of the nominees' backgrounds and the need

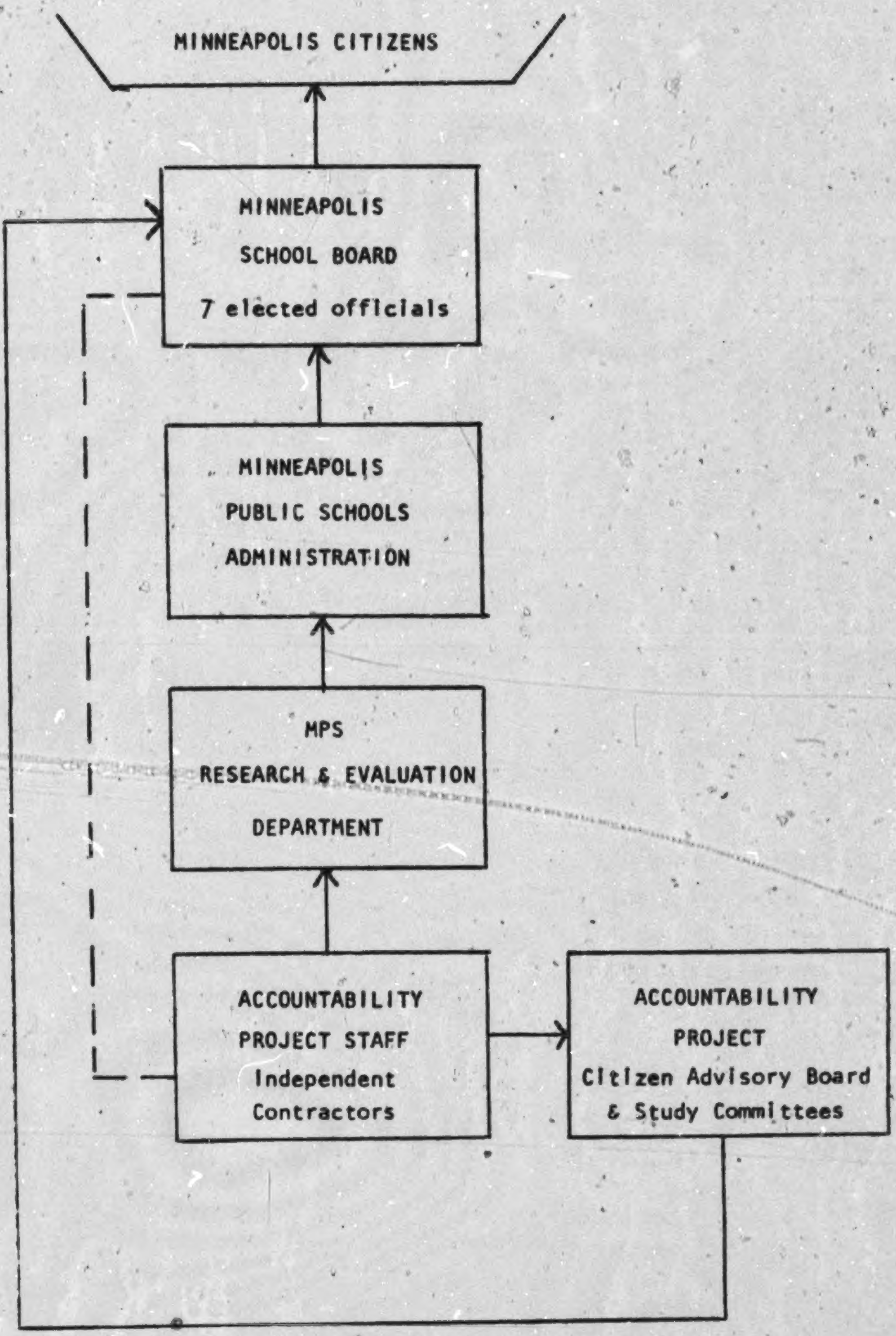
MINNEAPOLIS CITIZENS
MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL BOARD 7 elected officials
MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION
MPS RESEARCH & EVALUATION DEPARTMENT
ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT STAFF Independent Contractors
ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT Citizen Advisory Board & Study Committees

Exhibit 1.

ORGANIZATION CHART OF MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT, 1975-76

⟶ Report Lines — — — Contractual Agreements for better representation from the North and East Areas took place. The list of 15 names was ranked according to the criteria and the first six nominees on the list were sent invitations to join the board. All accepted.

In January 1976 one of the student board members resigned due to lack of time. The board decided to replace him with another student and calls were made to all student councils to find interested students. Only one student indicated interest. She was invited to join, accepted and served for the balance of 1975-76.

Names of advisory board members are shown in Appendix A, page 45.

Selection of the Study Topic

Project staff sent 700 topic proposal forms to community organizations, past study participants, and school staff at the end of June 1975. Proposal forms described five criteria for submitting topics:

1. The topic should be relevant to children throughout the city; not just in one school or a group of schools.
2. Emphasis should be placed on regular, ongoing programs, functions or activities financed mainly by the local district--not on programs which depend mainly on federal or state categorical funds. (Emphasis on locally funded projects was maintained throughout the Accountability Project since projects funded by the federal government and the state typically provided evaluation funds.)
3. Some possibility for change resulting from the committee's recommendations should exist.
4. The topic for study must currently exist. That is, the evaluation committee should focus on actual, not planned, activities.
5. The topic should be one which would be of interest to a large number of citizens, not just a few special interest groups.

In August 1975, the new advisory board met to consider a list of 52 topic proposals. The list of proposals was developed by combining proposals of previous years with those received in July. The board discussed each of the 52 proposals, compared them with the selection criteria and reduced the list to 22.

Board members then chose three topics which were of most interest to them. The three topics were: school discipline, school administration and principals, and multi-ethnic educational programs. These three were discussed in terms of information available, how much change could realistically result from study recommendations, how many persons would be interested in the topic and what the charge might be for each topic. Two board members were assigned to each of the three topics to develop preliminary charges. After discussion of these charges, the advisory board selected School Discipline as its topic.

The preliminary charge developed for Discipline was then discussed, edited and approved by the end of September 1975. (A visitor who attended the advisory board public meetings suggested that the charge should be developed by the School Discipline study committee at its first few meetings rather than being developed by the advisory board. Board members argued that it would probably take the new committee several meetings to approve a charge and this would cut down on time for study and development of recommendations. Board members also pointed out that the charge described minimum requirements for the study and that the committee could ask for changes or extend the study beyond the charge if it wished to.)

Selection of Study Committee Chairperson

Board members were asked to suggest candidates for study committee chairperson in August 1975. Only one name was submitted, Madge Zietlow. The board wanted to choose a chairperson before finalizing the charge so that the chairperson could have an influence on the final statement.

In September, the board interviewed Zietlow (member of the Accountability Project's Community Participation committee; parent of two Minneapolis students; teacher in Chicago for eight years) and voted unanimously to name her chairperson of the School Discipline committee. As such, Zietlow became the 19th voting member of the advisory board.

Duties of the chairperson were: 1) to see that the committee focused on the charge 2) to make certain that all members were given an opportunity to speak and that each member's opinion was respected 3) to present the final report to the school board, and 4) to follow up implementation of the recommendations.

Reviewing School Discipline Study Committee Activities

Ten advisory board members and the project director attended four or more meetings of the School Discipline committee. (All board members were required to attend at least two committee meetings in order to vote on committee recommendations at the end of the year. Seventeen board members fulfilled this requirement.)

In November 1975, the advisory board reviewed the composition of the School Discipline committee. At that time, 250 persons were receiving committee mailings and 90 individuals had attended meetings. Of the individuals attending, 22 had been identified as not previously involved with the Accountability Project, 25 were identified as Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) employees, 34 were parents of MPS students and three were MPS students. Geographically, all sections of Minneapolis were represented and a number of participants came from outside the city. A sight count of racial and ethnic representation showed that there were 2 Chicanos, 1 Asian American, 9 Blacks and no Native Americans. Board members suggested several organizations and people whom the staff could contact to increase Native American participation. It was also suggested that Native American speakers be scheduled.

The advisory board heard a report on the progress of the School Discipline committee in February 1976. Zietlow, committee chairperson, indicated that attendance at meetings had been good, but participants had been frustrated by lack of time to ask questions of speakers and by speakers who did not answer some of the questions they were asked to cover. Board members expressed their concern that the committee had not as yet defined "discipline" and suggested that more information on how teachers handle problems in the classroom was needed.

In May 1976, the advisory board reviewed the School Discipline committee's recommendations and committee statement. One of the board's criticisms was that the format of the recommendations was confusing. It also suggested that two of the recommendations be eliminated or revised because they were either repetitive or too general. The advisory board and the School Discipline committee then met to discuss the changes suggested by the board and to vote on final recommendations. A new format for the recommendations was adopted and two of the committee's original recommendations were eliminated.

THE STUDY COMMITTEE: SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

In September 1975, press releases describing the School Discipline study were sent to daily newspapers, to all major weeklies in the city, and to all Minneapolis Public School papers. In addition, ads were placed in the "personal" columns of the city's major daily and weekly papers headlined, "Help Wanted Minneapolis Citizens." These ads asked citizens interested in a task force on school discipline to call the project office. A notice of the study and the committee charge were sent to all PTSA's, principals, teacher organizations, school human relations coordinators, community organizations (identified through the Community Participation committee's survey in 1974-75), and all past Accountability Project participants. (A copy of the committee charge is shown on page 10.) The committee chairperson also made a presentation to the school board describing the study and inviting interested citizens to participate.

The School Discipline committee began meeting in October 1975. It held 30 meetings, on Monday evenings, at the Minneapolis Area Vocational Technical Institute from 7:30 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. At the first 16 meetings, called "resource" meetings, speakers described problems, policies, and procedures regarding school discipline. The last 14 "discussion" meetings focused on members' concerns about school discipline and on recommendations for change. Average attendance at resource meetings was about 30; at discussion meetings it averaged about 15. Voting members (those who attended four or more resource sessions--a criterion set by the committee) numbered 56 and those attending the majority of discussion sessions numbered 19.

The Study Committee Process

Each week, members received an agenda for the coming meeting and minutes for the meeting held the previous Monday. Before each meeting began members signed an attendance sheet and were given a packet of resource materials which pertained to the evening's agenda. The first half hour of each resource meeting was devoted to committee discussion, comments and questions. During that time, the chairperson made general announcements and the staff briefly reviewed the contents of the resource packet.

Speakers for the first nine resource meetings were scheduled by the project staff. From one to eight speakers were scheduled for each meeting although each speaker did not necessarily make a major presentation. Each major speaker was given 20 minutes to make a presentation and to answer questions on the agenda. Usually, after each speaker had made a presentation, the committee was given about 10-15 minutes for questions and then the next speaker was introduced. As the meetings progressed, members became frustrated by speakers who took more than 20 minutes for the presentations, cutting into the committee's time for questions. To alleviate this problem, speakers were told that the chairperson would cut them off after 20 minutes. While there usually seemed to be more questions than time, this procedure did help increase time for questions.

ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

COMMUNITY EVALUATION OF MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL PROGRAMS
ROOM 319, MAVTI, 1101 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH, MINNEAPOLIS 55404 TELEPHONE 338-1102

October, 1975

TO: THE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE STUDY COMMITTEE

FROM: THE ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

RE: THE COMMITTEE CHARGE

The committee is to evaluate school discipline as it affects student learning, teaching and school administration in the Minneapolis Public Schools. The committee is to be mindful of the many forces outside the school setting which also affect the learning environment. The committee's purpose is to help the Minneapolis Schools develop a climate for effective learning in a diverse ethnic, cultural and economic society.

The final report shall include, as a minimum, the following:

1) A description of

    a) federal, state and local legislation, court decisions, state and local policies and guidelines dealing with school attendance and behavior.
    b) practices and programs for regulating and reporting the behavior of students, school personnel and visitors in the Minneapolis Schools.
    c) available statistics relative to disciplinary problems and actions and costs in each Minneapolis school.
    d) the Minneapolis principal's role in developing and administering disciplinary policy.
    e) the teacher's role in developing and administering disciplinary policy.
    f) the role of others (i.e., students, parents, school administration) in developing and administering disciplinary policy.
    g) auxiliary services used in Minneapolis and in other school districts to deal with disciplinary problems (including interagency services and staff training programs).
    h) expectations of students, parents, teachers, administrators and support personnel regarding behavior and the reporting and regulation of behavior.
    i) procedures for communication between the school and the home about behavior in the Minneappls Schools.
    j) local programs to develop student and community knowledge and understanding of discipline policies and appeal procedures.

2) An evaluation of current programs, practices, policies and procedures for regulating and reporting behavior in the Minneapolis Schools.

3) Recommendations, including methods to implement the recommendations.

Exhibit 2

Charge to the Discipline Study Committee Made by the Accountability Project Advisory Board.

In January 1976, the committee devoted an entire meeting to discussion and planning agendas for the next five resource sessions. Staff suggested speakers and topics which had not yet been covered and which were needed to fulfill the charge. The committee decided to schedule one extra resource meeting (on a weekday afternoon) and to focus the remaining resource sessions on positive solutions to discipline problems. The committee also wanted to hear from more teachers and students who were dealing with day-to-day discipline in the classroom. Project staff then scheduled six resource sessions based on these committee decisions.

There was a two-week break, in February, between the end of the resource sessions and the beginning of discussion sessions, to give staff time to compile the first draft of the background summary for the final report. This summary, of all the committee had heard and read, was sent to the advisory board and to voting committee members. The committee then spent four meetings editing the summary, line by line, and listing committee concerns. This editing was done so that all members would have a common and complete knowledge of the information presented to the committee, since most members had not attended all meetings nor read all written resources. By listing concerns (the first phase in developing recommendations) while editing the summary, the committee guaranteed that recommendations would be based only on information presented to the committee, and not on extraneous ideas or unsubstantiated opinions.

A second draft of the background summary was written and sent to everyone on the mailing list and to all speakers. Recipients were given two weeks to suggest changes. Suggestions for revision were presented to the committee for approval before the third and final draft was written.

The staff categorized the concerns listed by the committee during its editing process; then the development of recommendations began. Members were given forms to facilitate the development of written recommendations. Recommendations were mailed or phoned to the project office and were then reproduced for discussion by the full committee. The committee discussed each recommendation and then voted to include or eliminate it, combine it with another recommendation or reword it. By its 28th meeting the committee had developed seven recommendations which were sent to the advisory board for review. A copy of the recommendations was sent to all voting committee members with a notice giving them a week to enter minority reports. No minority reports were entered.

At its 29th meeting the committee reviewed and edited a committee statement which had been drafted by the committee chairperson. The statement contained the committee's definition of discipline and emphasized some of the committee's major concerns and recommendations. The statement was edited line by line and the committee voted approval. At its final meeting the committee met with the advisory board, and the final wording and format of the recommendations and committee statement were discussed and approved.

Method of Decision Making

At the committee's first meeting a booklet describing the project history, the role and functions of the advisory board, and the general committee process and time schedule was given to each person. The committee chairperson and the project coordinator described the material in the booklet and members were given an opportunity to ask questions. In previous years, confusion had arisen regarding the role of the advisory board and the committee process. The booklet was a major attempt to eradicate this confusion.

According to advisory board policy, each committee had the authority to determine its meeting procedure. The basic method of decision-making used by the School Discipline committee was informal consensus, with majority vote used when there was apparent disagreement or when a vote was requested. At a November meeting, time was designated for members to ask questions about, and to discuss, committee procedure. One member asked if resource packets could be distributed a week before the meeting to which they pertained, so that members could read the background material and better understand presentations. Staff agreed to do this whenever possible, pointing out that speakers didn't always send in their material soon enough to do this. Another member was concerned that committee members have more input into resources. Staff reminded members that members would plan the agendas for the last five meetings and that members could always submit materials which the staff would reproduce for the whole committee.

At its eleventh meeting in January, the committee adopted a voting requirement. This requirement was adopted to prevent a (hypothetical) bloc who had not previously participated in the study from voting on recommendations. The committee made attendance at four or more resource sessions a requirement for voting on recommendations and the background summary. It was emphasized that anyone could come to any meeting and participate in discussion, but if a vote were called for, members who did not fulfill the requirement could not vote.

In developing recommendations the committee decided to work as a full group rather than breaking into small groups for discussion. The first few meetings were spent in discussion and an outline of the recommendations began to emerge. As the deadline for developing recommendations approached, a loose form of parliamentary procedure was used. Motions were made, seconded, discussed and voted on. No quorum was required for voting and a simple majority vote was needed to pass a motion. (While no quorum was required, the chairperson didn't start the meetings until about 10 persons had arrived.) Decisions made by vote were frequently changed later in the meeting or at ensuing meetings. Committee members seemed to want unanimity on recommendations and wording and if objections were raised to a decision, members tried to accommodate the objection.

Presentation and Dissemination of the Report

On May 25, 1976, the School Discipline committee's recommendations were presented to the board of education. The advisory board chairperson first gave some project history and described work of the School Discipline committee. Recommendations were then presented by the committee's chairperson. (The committee statement to the school board and a summary of recommendations are given in Appendix B, page 48. The complete report included statements of concern and guidelines for implementing recommendations.)

Press releases were sent to the major daily and weekly newspapers, to all MPS publications, and to radio and television stations. These releases and the report stimulated favorable publicity.

Copies of the 97-page report were sent to all persons on the mailing list, the school board, MPS principals, school libraries, school faculty lounges, and to all speakers who had made presentations to the committee. Reports also were distributed to MPS central office and area administrators, to a number of legislators of city, state and national government, and to about 200 persons who called the office requesting reports. More than 1,000 reports were initially distributed and additional reports were printed as requests for multiple copies came from organizations such as PTSA's and advisory councils.

Summaries of the report, which did not include the 75 pages of background information, were sent to about 300 community organizations identified by the Community Participation committee's survey and to all school psychologists, counselors, and social workers in the school district.

PROJECT STAFF

Much of the Accountability Project's strength was due to the efficiency of the coordinator who had served the project since its beginning. In November 1975, the coordinator resigned to accept a new position. She agreed, however, to fulfill her obligations by serving as an unpaid consultant to the new coordinator for the remainder of the year.

In December 1975, upon recommendation of the resigning coordinator, and with the unanimous approval of the advisory board, a new coordinator was appointed to serve through June 30, 1976.

The new coordinator had served on the Curriculum Development study committee, had been assistant coordinator in 1974-75, and was thoroughly familiar with the project's methods of operation.

The staff transition took place smoothly and efficient staff services to the committee continued to be provided without a hitch.

BUDGET

State funding of the Accountability Project ended upon completion of its third year in June 1975. Since the State Council on Quality Education funded projects for a maximum of three years, the project was well aware of a need to find other sources of funding. Accordingly, the advisory board began its search for 1975-76 funds in November 1974.

Federal and state sources--other than CQE--were explored and were soon dismissed as unlikely funding agencies for the project. Attention turned to private agencies and to the Minneapolis School Board.

Most advisory board members preferred private funding. They felt that the project's independence, objectivity, and credibility might be compromised if the Minneapolis Public Schools--in a sense, the subject of the project's studies--were the funding source.

Private funding sources were not encouraging. They felt that the project was not new nor innovative since it had been in operation for three years, and that if the project were valuable the school board should be willing to fund it.

Faced with this negative assessment of the probability of private funding, the advisory board looked again at MPS funding. It was argued that any funding source, even a private one, could compromise the project's independence and that study committees which had control over their own procedures, and which were open to anyone, were unlikely to be dominated by school authorities. It was also suggested that the school board might be more likely to implement recommendations if it were paying for project studies. Taking these arguments into consideration, the advisory board then asked the project director (who was also director of research and evaluation for the Minneapolis Public Schools) to include a request for Accountability Project funding in his department's 1975-76 operating budget request to the school board.

A request for $32,000, which would enable the project to conduct two new studies and to followup the recommendations of the five previous studies, was made. Advisory board members and the state director for the Council on Quality Education sent letters to the superintendent urging approval of the request. However, in March 1975, along with many other proposed projects, the Accountability Project's request was dropped from the budget submitted to the school board by the administration.[2]

Unwilling to admit defeat, the advisory board prepared a revised budget of $25,000 and turned its efforts to convincing school board directors that the Minneapolis Public Schools should fund the project. Individual advisory board members sent letters and phoned school board directors; a letter was written to all past Accountability Project study participants asking them to do the same. The Minneapolis League of Women Voters wrote supporting project funding and the Minneapolis Tribune also urged funding in an editorial. In addition, the project's study committee on Community Participation recommended, in May 1975, that an ongoing community evaluation process such as the Accountability Project be maintained by the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Advisory board members attended school board meetings in April, May, and June 1975 to argue for project funding. Nevertheless, the outlook was not promising. To prepare for the possibility that the project would be discontinued, a third "phase out" budget of $6,000 was prepared which would provide for followup on past project recommendations, but which would not permit new studies. At its June 11, 1975 meeting the school board discussed the two project budgets--one for $25,000 which would allow a study and one for $6,000 which would provide the followup implementation only. After considerable debate the Accountability Project was allotted $20,000 for a study and operation in 1975-76.

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[2] The 1975-76 General Fund budget represented a six percent increase over the previous year. Funding of the Accountability Project would have increased the Research and Evaluation Department budget by 44%.

In addition to the $20,000 allocated by the school board, the project received $1,200 from the Council on Quality Education, with the condition that the money be spent for supplies and postage prior to June 30, 1975.

Here are project expenditures of school board funds for 1975-76:

Item	Amount Spent	Percent of Total Budget
. Coordinator	$10,000.00	50.0%
. Asst. Coordinator	5,000.00	25.0
. Clerical overload	576.00	2.9
. Printing and postage	2,342.46	11.7
. Phone	427.58	2.1
. Office supplies	244.13	1.2
. Research and Evaluation	163.91	.8
. Space rental	160.00	.8
. Miscellaneous (Books and materials, equipment rental and maintenance, local travel, newspapers, advertisements)	595.19	3.0
. Unexpended funds	490.73	2.5
Total	$20,000.00	100.0%

The fact that the project was able to operate within the budget and still attain its objectives is attributed to three things. The first was the commitment of the staff. Despite a cutback in the funds available for staff services, the services continued to be provided without a noticeable change from previous years. The staff contributed many hours for which it was not compensated. Second, the project moved from the non-school rental offices it had maintained during its first three years into rent-free offices in a school building. (This move was made as an economy measure at the direction of the School Board. The change in facility and its impact on the project is discussed in a later section.) Finally, supplemental funds from the CQE helped to defray mailing costs generated by demands for copies of the five previous reports, by the extensive mailing list, and by an unusually heavy demand for the Discipline report.

EVALUATION OF THE ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

In this section an attempt is made to assess the impact of the Accountability Project. A review of evaluation approaches used by various evaluators is given. A picture of the project as seen by participants, the news media, and external evaluators is presented. Finally, a status report on the implementation of project recommendations is offered.

THE PROJECT AS SEEN BY ITS MEMBERS

Initial evaluation efforts focused on helping the new project get started. Operational guidelines--plans for implementing the project--were developed by the director. Later, the coordinator devised a form which enabled study committee chairpersons and staff to obtain reactions from committee members following each meeting. Finally, a questionnaire was completed by members at the end of the year giving their views of the committee's efforts and making suggestions for future operations.

These three forms proved valuable and were used, with minor changes, throughout the project. Samples of the forms are shown in Appendix C, starting on page 52.

At the end of the third year, a more detailed questionnaire was mailed to 120 persons who had served as voting members on one or more of the five study committees. Half of them responded. No attempt was made to followup non-respondents. All responses were made anonymously.

Those persons responding had highly favorable views of the project. About seventy percent thought the project was an effective way for the community to influence the schools and sixteen percent reported it was simply "too soon to say." Significantly, only three percent saw the project as a tool of the schools which really did not serve the public.

More than nine out of ten respondents felt the Accountability Project helped improve education in Minneapolis.

Who were the members of the Accountability Project? This question can't be answered with any high degree of accuracy. Membership varied yearly--with the topic under consideration. No consistent attempt was made to keep records of membership characteristics. Indeed, there was no such thing as a "membership." People who wanted to attend, attended.

First year advisory board members, most of whom were experienced in educational circles in Minneapolis, reported that there were "many new faces" in the study groups. An attempt to verify this observation and to gain additional information about participants was made through mailed surveys at the end of the third and fourth years. Responses did not require signatures. Sixty-one "voting" participants responded.

The third year survey, 1974-75, showed that 15% of the respondents were not involved with the schools in any way; not even as parents. Almost half (46%) reported that they were parents of MPS students and 43% reported that they were school district employees. Eighteen percent were volunteers in the schools, 16% were former MPS students and 2% were current students. (Responses total more than 100% since respondents could give more than one answer, e.g., both a parent and a volunteer, or employee.) The picture is clouded by the low questionnaire response rate of 50%. About all one can safely assume is that most participants were linked to the schools in some way, as parents, employees, volunteers or as past or present students.

The fourth year survey, in June 1976, was completed by 264 persons of the 509 whose names were on the mailing list for a response rate of 52%.

This final survey showed that more than half the respondents were female (52%), four out of five were college graduates, and most reported they had above average incomes (57%). Racial representation appeared to be roughly proportional to the city population, with 6% Blacks, and 1% Native Americans. About 90% of the respondents were between the ages of 26 and 59, while 3% were under 26 and 6% were 60 or older. The questionnaire with complete responses is shown in Table 1, page 19.

A high percentage of respondents who claimed they were "active" participants in the project lived outside the City of Minneapolis (19%). This high percentage did not seem to agree with observations made at resource and discussion meetings of the study committees. To clarify this apparent discrepancy, an analysis was made of the mailing addresses of all persons listed in each study committee report as "active" members. An unduplicated count was made yielding 206 addresses. (The duplicated count was 272.) These addresses were then plotted on a Zip Code map. This approach showed that about 95% of project participants who actually attended a substantial number of meetings had mailing addresses within the City of Minneapolis. The remaining five percent were located in St. Paul and Minneapolis suburbs, with one person outside the Metropolitan Area.

Table 1
Responses of 264 Minneapolis Accountability Project Participants to a Questionnaire Mailed at the End of the Fourth Year, May 1976 (percentages)

The Minneapolis Accountability Project is completing its fourth year. It's time to take stock and see where we are going.

Your name was on the Project's mailing list and we would like your thinking on the Project. Please take five minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it.

1. Did you ever (do you) consider yourself an active participant in the Accountability Project, or not?

51% Yes, I was an active participant.

49 No, I was never an active participant.

2. Which of these statements do you think best describes the Accountability Project?

55% It was an effective way for the community to influence the schools.

22 It was an honest but ineffective attempt to influence the schools through community participation.

2 It was a tool of the schools which really did not serve the public.

21 Other (please specify)____________________

3. Were you actively involved with the Minneapolis Public Schools, in any way, before joining the Accountability Project?

65% Yes

13 No

22 I never joined the Project.

4. Should the Accountability Project be continued, or not?

67% Yes

13 No

20 Other answers (please specify)____________________

To get a picture of the representativeness of the Accountability Project we need to ask some personal questions. However, you need not sign your name. All responses are anonymous.

5. What is your sex? 47% Male 52% Female 1% - No answer

6. What is your age?

1% 18 or under

2 19 to 25

28 26 to 34

62 40 to 59

6 60 or over

1 No answer

7. What is your Race? 83% White 6 Black 1 American Indian 10 No answer or other answers

8. What is your residence?

10% North Minneapolis	6 Northeast Minneapolis
41 South Minneapolis	9 Southeast Minneapolis
10 West Minneapolis	24 Outside Minneapolis

9. What is your family income?

57% Above average

36 Average

6 Below Average

2 No answer

10. What is your educational level? (mark one only)

6% High school graduate (or less)

13 Some college or post high school training

81 College graduate

Thank you. Please return your questionnaire by June 4, 1976 to the Accountability Project in the enclosed stamped envelope. Results will be published in the Project's Annual Report. The Annual Report will be available after June 30 from the Research and Evaluation Department, 807 N. E. Broadway, Minneapolis, MN 55413 (348-6140).

5/76

The map is shown on page 21, as Exhibit 3. It appears that many persons who considered themselves as active participants in the project did not actually attend many study committee meetings nor vote on the committee recommendations. "Active," to them, apparently meant following the committee's progress by reading the mailed materials.

Although some mailing addresses represented business locations and not residences, particularly in zone 13--the school administration's central office, it appears that nearly all participants active in resource and discussion meetings and in voting on recommendations were Minneapolis residents. Furthermore, it appears that the bulk of the project activists were from that area of the city south of the city center and that very few were from the far north or northeast areas.

Some comparisons may be made of the 1974-75 and 1975-76 survey results if it is remembered that the two respondent groups were not directly comparable. Respondents in 1974-75 represented about half of the "voting" members. In 1975-76, questionnaires were sent to all people on the mailing list and although we will make comparisons based only on those respondents who said they were "active" participants, it has already been shown that "active" participants are not the same as "voting" members--at least not as far as residence is concerned.

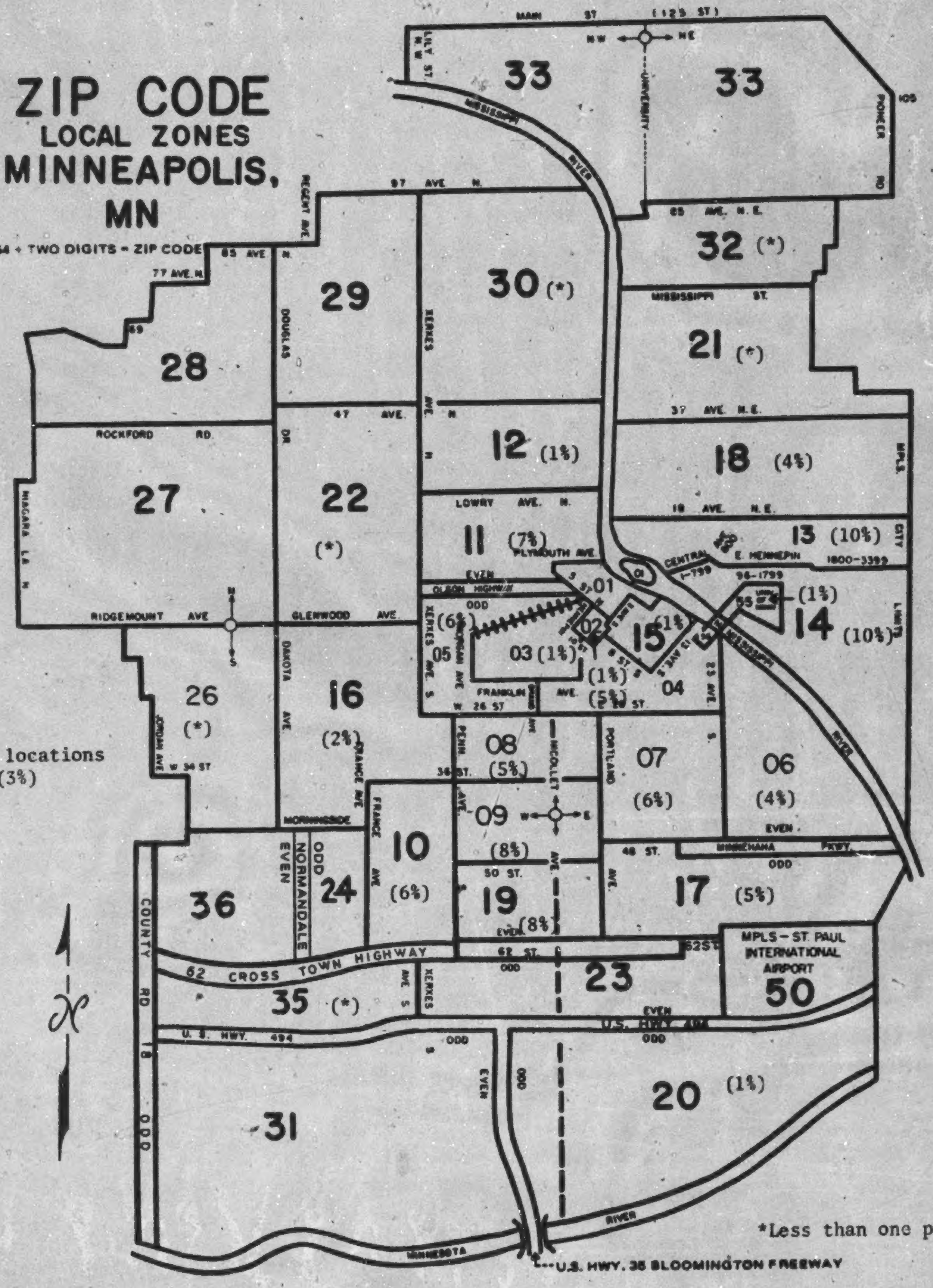
With this limitation, it appears that the percentage of people not previously involved with the MPS was about the same in both years (15% in 1974-75, 19% in 1975-76).

Second, significant drop in members' perceptions of the project's effectiveness apparently took place. The question asked was: "Which of these statements do you think best describes the Accountability Project?"

Response	1974-75	1975-76
It was an effective way for the community to influence the schools.	69%	57%
It was an honest but ineffective attempt to influence the schools through community participation.	15	26
It was a tool of the schools which really did not serve the public.	3	2
Other answers	16	16
	103%	100%

(Responses added to more than 100% because some respondents qualified or gave "other" answers in addition to their major response.)

PERCENTAGES ( )


ZIP CODE
LOCAL ZONES
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
554 + TWO DIGITS = ZIP CODE
33
33
32 (*)
30 (*)
29
28
21 (*)
12 (1%)
18 (4%)
27
22 (*)
11 (7%)
13 (10%)
01
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15 (1%)
14 (10%)
55 (1%)
04
(6%)
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(5%)
26 (*)
16 (2%)
08 (5%)
07 (6%)
06 (4%)
09 (8%)
10 (6%)
36
24
19 (8%)
17 (5%)
23
35 (*)
MPLS - ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
50
20 (1%)
31
MAIN ST
125 ST
NW
NE
W
E
N
S
UNIVERSITY
PIONEER RD
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
97 AVE. N.
85 AVE. N.E.
85 AVE N.
77 AVE. N.
69
REGENT AVE
DOUGLAS DR.
XERXES AVE. N
MISSISSIPPI ST.
47 AVE.
37 AVE. N.E.
ROCKFORD RD.
LOWRY AVE. N.
18 AVE. N.E.
NIAGARA LA. N
RIDGEMOUNT AVE
GLENWOOD AVE.
PLYMOUTH AVE.
OLSON HIGHWAY
EVEN
ODD
CENTRAL
E. HENNEPIN
1800-3399
1-799
96-1799
CITY
MPLS.
LIMITS
XERXES AVE. S
MORGAN AVE
FRANKLIN AVE.
W. 26 ST
23 AVE. S
DAKOTA AVE.
FRANCE AVE
JORDAN AVE
W. 34 ST
36 ST.
PENN AVE.
NICOLLET AVE.
PORTLAND AVE.
MORNINGSIDE
NORMANDALE
MINNEHAHA PKWY.
46 ST.
50 ST.
62 ST.
62 CROSS TOWN HIGHWAY
COUNTY RD 18
U.S. HWY. 494
MINNESOTA RIVER
U.S. HWY. 35 BLOOMINGTON FREEWAY

Other locations
(3%)

*Less than one percent

Exhibit 3: Zip Codes of Participants Listed as Active in Each Study Committee Report[21] (Unduplicated count. N=206.)

The drop in perceived effectiveness might have been due to members' awareness that the project had not been funded and to their observations that the recommendations of the Community Participation committee had not been implemented. (This point is discussed in the section on Implementation of Project Recommendations.) Also, by 1975-76, members had another year to observe the project's impact and the impact of four previous studies.

Whatever the reason, relatively fewer members felt the project should be continued in 1975-76 than did members in 1974-75.

Should the Accountability Project be Continued?

	1974-75	1975-76
Yes	87%	71%
No	8	10
Other answers	5	19
	100%	100%

The drop in the percentage of members wanting the project continued did not result in a corresponding increase in the members who wanted the project discontinued even though members' perceptions of the project's effectiveness had dipped. In 1975-76, more members gave "other" or qualified responses, such as, "Depends on school board action--if they don't do anything with results, this project should not continue," and, "Continue, but not with MPS funds."

To regain perspective, it should be emphasized that the general reaction of the project's active members to the effectiveness of the project appears to have been a favorable one. It is estimated that a minimum of 57% and possibly as many as 85% of these members perceived the project as effective. From 71% to 92% wanted the project continued--depending on the circumstances. Fewer than ten percent wanted the project discontinued. Significantly, only two or three percent saw the project as a "tool of the schools," although the project was initiated by the school administration and was funded directly by the school board during its last year.

The reader is cautioned, however, that all conclusions based on the member surveys are subject to possible sampling bias, since many people surveyed did not respond to the questionnaire. Also, comparisons of third and fourth year respondents are based on the assumption that the two groups were directly comparable. There is no guarantee that it is an accurate assumption.

THE PROJECT AS SEEN BY STUDY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

The people who chaired the six study committees were in a unique position to observe the weekly deliberations, the recommendations, and their impact on the schools. In September 1976, the MPS Research and Evaluation Department sent a letter to all chairpersons asking them to comment on the impact of their committee and the impact of the Accountability Project. The specific questions asked were:

In your opinion:

Has the committee's report made a favorable impact on education in the Minneapolis Public Schools or not? What did it accomplish, if anything? Was it worth the effort?

(and)

How do you feel about the Accountability Project, itself? What did it accomplish, if anything? Was it worth the effort?

Complete, verbatim, responses are reported.

Nathan Miller, Chairperson, Pupil Progress Reporting Committee: 1972-73:

Committee Impact

> The committee has had some impact; probably marginal. I think it was worthwhile. The study is there and available for whoever may want to use it.
>
> Some recommendations were implemented. The study may have helped us accelerate some things that would have been done anyway.
>
> I have some disappointment in the way the recommendations were handled. Some recommendations were referred to larger groups representing particular interests, such as teachers' organizations. They were not given the same kind of study they would have received from a building or from an administrative area and thus tended to get shunted off.

Project Impact

> It was worth the effort. Very emphatically. It got people involved that might not otherwise have been involved. That was worthwhile in itself.
>
> It demonstrated that citizens and educators could come together and work constructively in a professional climate on some very tough questions and issues. It showed that they could arrive at consensus after hard study.

C. J. Howard, Chairperson, Use of Teachers' Skills Committee: 1972-73

Committee Impact

Our committee's efforts had little impact on education in Minneapolis. Few of our proposals were adopted. It would be unfair to measure this committee's success by the proposals adopted. Measure the school system by its failure to improve its use of teachers' skills through our proposals or other methods.

Our study found other school systems working on this subject and doing much more than Minneapolis, but habit and the comfort of traditional ways were not to be changed by us. We can be proud that we did not choose a simple task or one with predestined solutions (too often committees address problems on the verge of resolution and recommend actions about to be taken).

We were individuals-teachers, school principals, central office administrators, and public members-as well as representatives of teachers' and principals' organizations. Our report was adopted unanimously by that group.

In the years immediately following our committee report I have been disappointed in not seeing substantial improvements in the use of teachers' skills in Minneapolis.

Perhaps the contacts and cross education of the participants will affect attitudes and future changes in our school system personnel practices in the future years.

Project Impact

The entire project has been worthwhile. Some improvements have occurred, but the major benefit of this project was in permitting those who thought themselves outside of the "system" a forum for their concerns. Without such a vent, the schools would appear closed, and the outsiders would be suspicious.

Marty Anderson, Chairperson, Basic Skills Committee: 1973-74

Committee Impact

Without going into a detailed analysis, point by point, of specific recommendations, I think the impact on Public Schools was considerable. Private citizens had the opportunity to research, analyze and recommend to the School Board, rather than simply to react to Board decisions. Of the three committee's on which I participated, many recommendations were implemented. To a non-public person, this is extremely important.

Project Impact

I think the concept of the Accountability Project is invaluable, because it opens the decision making process to people who are otherwise alienated from this process. Yes, it was worth the effort.

James Small, Chairperson, Curriculum Development Commiteee: 1973-74

Committee Impact

The Curriculum Evaluation Report has made some impact on the educational procedures in the Minneapolis School District and the State of Minnesota Education System. As Chairman, and some members, we feel that the finding of this committee would be indicative of any committee, regardless of the committee composition. We feel that we accomplished several things, one of those is that each building will establish goals that will meet the District Goals. There are identifying concerns that are very strong in the various communities of the School District. We feel nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Project Impact

The Accountability Project has served as a very necessary tool for that segment of the District that has been taken for granted by the leaders of the School District. This project allows a larger segment of the School Community to understand the responsibility that the school and parent should have toward each child.

The death of the Accountability Project struck a blow to those in the District the project has reached and to those it was beginning to approach.

Dorothy Lilja, Chairperson, Community Participation Committee: 1974-75

Committee Impact

Although it is difficult to assess the impact of the Community Participation study since its recommendations have not been implemented, certain observations may be made regarding it. The C. P. committee has not yet received an administrative response to the report, and there has been no direction from the superintendent or Board of Education to school administrators regarding implementation of the recommendations.

There has been a significant amount of discussion of the recommendations, and some administrators seem to be more aware of the need for and desirability of community participation than they were previously. However, I am disappointed that there has been no encouragement of community participation at the building level. MPS has not made the transition from awareness to commitment.

The study was certainly worth the effort for the discussion it precipitated and the awareness it created. The recommendations are a useful tool for those seeking these kinds of participation. Implementation is an ongoing process.

Project Impact

I feel the Project itself was excellent for the kinds of awareness it created, the quality of the recommendations it generated, and the discussion of issues it brought about. Any project which precipitates constructive change is worthwhile.

Madge Zietlow, Chairperson, Discipline Committee: 1975-76

Committee Impact

The Discipline In The Schools report is still too new to know how well accepted it is and whether or not it will have a positive effect on the Minneapolis Public School System.

Despite this fact, I believe it was a worthwhile project since many people have read the report and are being challenged to "re-think" discipline.

Another reason that makes the effort worth it is that the participants are more knowledgeable about the Minneapolis Public Schools and have had an opportunity to test their ideas with others and have come up with some new ideas and attitudes. Therefore, if education is a lifetime vocation of sharing ideas this project has "educated" the participants and many people who have read the report.

Project Impact

Schools are a vital institution in a democracy. They need input from the citizens they serve. It is fortunate when a citizen's group has an oportunity to spend the time and effort to study issues and then have an opportunity to present their finding to a School Board. The Accountability Project provided this opportunity to everyone.

Many recommendations of the different studies were implemented or provided material for our educators to establish programs. The study on Community Participation has been disappointing. Schools must accept the fact that they have a role of educating the community and then accepting the community's input into the running of the schools.

It was interesting to note in our Discipline study that we felt that the implementation of many past recommendations concerning community participation, report cards, teacher training and utilization, a good feeling about one's self through curriculum, etc. would have led to a better disciplined and responsible school community.

Any time people get together to think together, study together and make recommendations together it is worthwhile because citizen participation leads to richer lives for the participants and often strong commitments.

THE PROJECT AS SEEN BY THE STATE COUNCIL ON QUALITY EDUCATION AND THE SUPERINTENDENT

Although not "members" of the Accountability Project, the State Coordinator for the Council on Quality Education and the school district's superintendent were definitely participants; the coordinator, as the administrative officer for the funding agency, and the superintendent, as the administrative officer of the agency which applied for funds to operate the project. Here are their views of the project. First, Dr. Eugene Kairies, State Coordinator for CQE:

> I am sure you are aware that my feelings, and those of the members of the Council on Quality Education, toward the Accountability Project were extremely positive. It's fair to say this was a prototype CQE project in reflecting three main interests embodied in the Council's legislation:
>
> (1) It was extremely innovative, perhaps comprising the first attempt to formally and systematically involve interested lay citizens in educational evaluations;
>
> (2) It represented "face validity" compliance with the Council's mandated interest in improving educational cost-effectiveness, since the Project's studies and recommendations presented possibilities for improving the District's programs and their management; and
>
> (3) The project successfully improved community involvement, taking citizen participation a substantial distance beyond tokenism, providing opportunities for lay persons to examine the substance of the District's instruction and management, and to make recommendations directly to the school board.
>
> Dick, it is also important for me to comment on the way the Accountability Project was conceived and run. I am aware of the central role you played in its conceptualization, initially requesting funds from the Council. Considering your position as director of the evaluation for the District, the Council was most impressed that this impetus for involving non-professional persons in school evaluation came from you.
>
> As you know, I am very pleased with the way the Accountability Project was run. Jan Hively, and to her assistant/successor Tracey Walen (now an Assistant CQE Coordinator) simply did a superb job of making the initial proposal in operating reality during the three years of CQE grant support.
>
> In conclusion, note should also be taken of the willingness of lay citizens to volunteer impressively large amounts of their time to improving education. I am sure the value of this time, especially that of persons who chaired various committees, is almost inestimable. But it deserves serious contemplation as a critical resource which was virtually given to the District. I sincerely hope other Districts will see the leverage that can be gained here against a modest expenditure.
>
> December 6, 1976

Dr. John B. Davis, Jr. was superintendent of the Minneapolis Public Schools from the start of the project until June 1975. His term thus covered the receipt of all reports, except the Discipline report. Here is his opinion:

> There is no question in my mind but that external influence has significant affect on public institutions.
>
> While the Minneapolis Public School System has always been responsive to the concerns and needs of its clients, I am quite convinced that the Accountability Project, well organized and directed to specific purpose, was extremely helpful in improving the general educational and human relations and communications systems between and among students, parents, faculty, staff and citizens.
>
> Obviously there were imperfections in the system, but the process enabled concerned citizens and school people to come together for the purpose of resolution of differences to the end that students in school be better served.
>
> As Superintendent I was proud of the effort by our school personnel to respond and was pleased with the participation and the broadened base of understanding that resulted from the several projects contained within the report.
>
> I commended the process to other school districts.
>
> September 27, 1976

The letters from Kairies and Davis were made in response to letters sent them by the project director requesting their opinions.

THE PROJECT AS SEEN BY THE NEWS MEDIA

The public report of the Accountability Project by the news media was extensive and consistently positive. Although no attempt was made to record or collect all public comments on the project, the publications reproduced on the following pages are illustrative of the reactions to the project by the press, radio, and T.V.. Negative comments about the project were not made by the media, to the best of our knowledge.

THE PROJECT AS SEEN BY AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR

An external evaluation of the Accountability Project was provided for the first three years by an independent agency, Guardian Resource, Inc.. This company was contracted by the Council on Quality Education to evaluate all CQE funded projects.

First year evaluation focused on assisting project administrators in developing operational procedures rather than on evaluating project impact; this because of the late funding for the first year of CQE. By the end of the second year, however, the evaluator reported:

> This project has been most successful in implementing and carrying out its objectives. The community members who make up the evaluation committees responded positively to questions about the project and their attitudes toward it and its implementation. Action taken by the school board and school administration in response to the committees' recommendations have not been great. However, the reports have not been ignored. It appears that the mechanisms for implementing change in a large institution move very, very slowly (Guardian Resource Development, Inc., 1974).

It should be remembered that this evaluation was based on information collected prior to June 1974 and thus dealt with only the Pupil Progress Reporting and Teachers' Skills studies.

The evaluator also estimated that 9,900 volunteer hours had been contributed by project participants in 1973-74.

Third year evaluation focused on three aspects: Project Findings, Objectives Accomplishment, and Community Involvement. The Accountability Project received the highest possible ratings in each of these aspects--a record attained by only one other project of the 31 CQE projects in the state. The evaluator concluded that the project was "...the best CQE project(s) that are currently funded" (Guardian Resource Development, Inc., 1975a).

An assessment of the implementation of project recommendations was made by the contracted evaluator:

> During the first two years of the project, 69 recommendations were made to the District. Of these, 52 have been responded to positively by the administrator; four have received negative responses, and 13 responses were neutral or uncertain. The school administrator's vast majority of positive responses would indicate that the recommendations made by the committees were meaningful and worthwhile (Guardian Resource Development, Inc., 1975b).

Minneapolis Tribune - Wednesday, June 12, 1974

Basic skills in the city schools

"Major efforts have been made to improve basic-skills instruction throughout the Minneapolis public-school system; a variety of excellent programs have been developed. With use of system-wide curriculum-development and evaluation procedures, and with strong leadership, the Minneapolis schools can accomplish the most important goal of assuring basic-skills competence."

That's the beginning of a report, "Basic Skills in the Minneapolis Schools," prepared by a citizens committee working under the Minneapolis Accountability Project and presented to the Minneapolis School Board Tuesday. It sets the tone of the entire 80-page report, which outlines what is being done in the city schools to teach the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, then lists and explains 10 specific recommendations for improving basic-skills instruction.

The emphasis in the recommendations is on the early screening of children to determine their proficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic; the definition of a continuous sequence of skill levels to be mastered on a pupil's way to basic competence; the setting of individual learning objectives for each child, each year, and the involvement of parents in helping the child meet those objectives. In addition, the report recommends the emphasis of achievement rather than of time spent in learning basic skills; different children will require different lengths of time to achieve competency in the basic skills, the report contends, but any child can achieve it "if given time for enough repetition in combination with reinforcement for success and use of materials which match the child's interests."

Some of the committee's recommendations will be more easily implemented —and, we suspect, more readily accepted — than others, but all of them are carefully drafted and merit equally careful consideration by school administrators, teachers and curriculum planners. What is beyond argument, in any event, is the committee's basic assumption: that children cannot function successfully as students or, later, as citizens without a basic competence in reading, writing and arithmetic. That, it seems to us, cannot be emphasized enough in any educational system.

The Minneapolis Accountability Project is sponsored by the public schools, but is funded by the Minnesota Council on Quality Education, giving it independence from the school system. The project depends on volunteer citizens, however — like the citizens who devoted seven months to weekly meetings, classroom visits and the study of written materials on basic-skills education. That kind of interest on the part of Minneapolis's citizens has played a big part in making the city's schools as good as they are.

Minneapolis Tribune - Wednesday, July 3, 1974

A community-based curriculum

The Minneapolis Accountability Project, continuing its study of the city's schools and how they might be improved, has issued a report urging the establishment of procedures for assuring that each school curriculum would spring from community needs and desires, but would also meet city-wide goals and standards. The report, given to the School Board late last month, begins by endorsing the decentralized approach to curriculum development currently in effect in the city's school system. That approach, the report notes, is suited to "the broadest possible participation in the curriculum-making process," enables schools to tailor courses to needs and goals of their communities and "realistically focuses on the teacher as the person most likely to bring about curriculum change."

But what is lacking, the report goes on to say, are procedures aimed at assuring that each school's curriculum is related to stated — and widely publicized — goals, that there is an ongoing mechanism for curriculum review and that broad community participation—including participation o students reflecting "a range of academic ability and interest"—takes place. The report recommends the appointment of curriculum coordinators and advisory bodies at school and area levels, as well as regular review and testing on a city-wide basis.

Like the project's earlier recommendations on basic education, the suggestions on curriculum development are well thought-out and detailed. Following the pattern outlined in them would increase community involvement with the schools and the chance for evaluating curricula without sacrificing the flexibility that the schools now enjoy. We hope the schools respond with a plan for implementing the main thrust of the report's recommendations.

THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR
FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 1974
9A

CITIZENS' GROUP ASKS RESPONSE

Schools prodded to upgrade grading

By MIKE ANDERSON
Minneapolis Star Staff Writer

A citizens' group which a year ago asked Minneapolis school officials to make 18 changes in the grading system wants its recommendations implemented more aggressively.

School officials are being asked to respond formally to each recommendation by Sept. 1 and to "take a more active role in selling and implementing these recommendations," Nathan Miller, the group's chairman and a General Mills executive, said yesterday.

Some of the recommendations to help both parents and children know whether progress is being made toward stated educational goals have been adopted, Miller said, but officials should have done more by now.

The proposals — including holding two parent-student-teacher conferences each school year — have been discussed by parents - students-teachers groups since they were presented to the Minneapolis School Board in June 1973.

The citizens' group is part of Minneapolis Project Accountability, a program funded by the Minnesota Council on Quality Education to give school administrators community feedback.

The recommendations also included:

Discontinuing standardized group IQ tests.

Abolishing citizenship grades.

Giving students and parents or guardians total access to all student files.

Establishing a program to assist 11th and 12th graders prepare personal files to be used in job interviews or for admission to other institutions.

Changing written grade reports to use only positive behavior in all checklists and to give parents space to make comments on report cards.

Janet Hively, project coordinator, said the committee feels school officials have been "remiss in not making (grading policy) changes that would be extremely easy to make" and in not making a detailed report on implementation progress.

John B. Davis, superintendent of schools, said in September that the report was "exceptional" and that the recommendations had been received in "a most positive and warm manner."

In January he told the committee that school officials "are truly making efforts to look carefully at each and every one of your 18 recommendations."

Davis said he had expected to respond to the recommendations by Dec. 31 but "several serious administrative problems" had prevented him from providing complete information.

School officials said consideration of some of the recommendations had been delayed by the school system's new program of administrative decentralization and its emphasis on getting decisions made by individual schools rather than a central administration.

According to school officials, several of the group's specific recommendations are under consideration and others have been adopted. For example, the use of the Lorge Thorndike school ability tests, which were administered only at grades 4 and 7, have been discontinued and policies on cumulative records have been changed as the group recommended.

The committee had said it was concerned about the validity of standardized group ability, or IQ tests, because "they tend to reflect cultural bias, student motivation and the test-taking situation."

Minneapolis schools continue to administer achievement tests.

Miller said the group's most controversial recommendation — annual conferences among student, teacher and parents — has not been implemented.

Most teachers oppose the idea, he said. They say they already follow an "open door" policy for students and parents and there isn't enough time in the school schedule to permit one-to-one conferences, he said.

The committee realized there would be problems accepting conferences, Miller said, but it was "very, very sincere" in its belief that three-way conferences can be an effective part of a student's learning process.

Minneapolis Midweek Sun - Thursday, June 28, 1973

Teacher involvement study presented

Teachers, principals, administrators and citizens representing a broad range of educational interests have for six months studied current practices for identifying and using teacher skills in Minneapolis schools. They have agreed on a set of practical recommendations to provide more feedback to teachers about their classroom performance, and to further involve teachers in administrative decisions which directly affect them.

The independent study committee has been working since January to evaluate administrative procedures for identifying and improving teaching skills and for making use of teacher strengths, sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools and funded by the Minnesota Council on Quality Education. Titled "The Use of Teachers' Skills in the Minneapolis Schools," the report was presented to the board of education Tuesday. Free copies are available from the Accountability Project office, 338-1102.

The data base for the Committee's study included responses to teacher and principal questionnaires, printed resource materials and presentations by 30 speakers. Resulting recommendations propose initiation of self-appraisal and peer-assessment programs as teacher - developed pilot projects. Procedures are suggested to involve teachers in building-level decisions about personnel assignment, use of money for the classroom, and building and area-level staff development programs. Other recommendations describe procedures for improving the school-community climate, and for bridging the gap between teacher training institutions and the public school system.

THE MINNEAPOLIS TEACHER
Local 59 AFT (AFL-CIO)
9 East 22nd Street, 871-886
Minneapolis, Minnesota 5540

Editorial...

A SOUND APPROACH TO ACCOUNTABILITY

Over the years, the Minneapolis Schools have taken a mature and intelligent approach to most educational problems. And while we do find fault with decisions of the administration and the school board, from time to time, their approach to the currently volatile subject of accountability surely is sound.

We read of strikes, particularly in Detroit and other Michigan cities, in which the subject of accountability is treated by school boards as a weapon to enforce, not accountability, but conformity. By contrast, in Minneapolis we have had a series of meetings conducted by the committee called the Community Evaluation of Minneapolis School Programs (operating under a grant from the Minnesota Council on Quality Education) in which interested people were given an opportunity to suggest valid approaches to this highly complex problem.

What many people too often forget is that teachers, the overwhelming majority of whom are deeply dedicated to their profession have always wanted strong accountability programs for all professionals. They want their fellow teachers to perform well, and they want their supportive personnel (administrati and consultative) to perform well.

Minneapolis teachers who have attended national conventions of teachers are aware that the Minneapolis school system has long been viewed as a leader in sound and progressive education programs.

With the responsible beginning the Minneapolis schools have made toward accountabilit procedures, we could well establish a program that would be emulated by school systems throughout the country.

Community participation in the schools

Minneapolis Tribune
Thursday,
May 29, 1975

A wide variety of individuals and groups in Minneapolis have an interest in the city's public schools — but most also feel somewhat frustrated in their efforts to influence school policies and programs. That was a major finding in the latest study by the Minneapolis Accountability Project, "Community Paticipation in the Minneapolis Schools," which was presented to the school board this week. The project, an independent evaluation organization funded through the schools by the Minnesota Council on Quality Education, identified 1,500 community groups with an interest in the schools, surveyed 420 of them — and found that 62 percent "feel less than 'somewhat effective' in having an impact on school affairs." The reasons: partly their own failures to get enough people involved, but partly "school barriers to citizen influence."

The study found, for instance, that despite the recent mushrooming of advisory committees at all administrative levels in the school system, there is still little involvement in decision-making. "There should be citizens on both decision-making and advisory committees," the study recommended. Citizens should have a voice in curriculum planning, budget matters and evaluation, it said — and the school board should establish a policy and set up a clear process for making sure that happens.

The study also recommended a greater voice for students through a student advisory board, which would choose two of its members to sit in on school-board meetings, and through a better-defined role for student government in each school. School publications, such as district and area newsletters, should be more even-handed in reporting controversial issues and should provide access to community groups and individuals with dissenting views. The community-education program, with its advisory councils, should be better integrated in the school system's total program.

Minneapolis school officials have shown an increasing awareness in recent years of the need to be responsive to the community they serve and to let parents and other citizens in on the operation of the schools. Their efforts have been commendable, but the study — as thorough and well-documented as all the Accountability Project's studies have been — shows that those efforts haven't been enough. The study's recommendations provide a good basis for new efforts to assure real, broadly based community participation in the community's schools.

School study group worth keeping

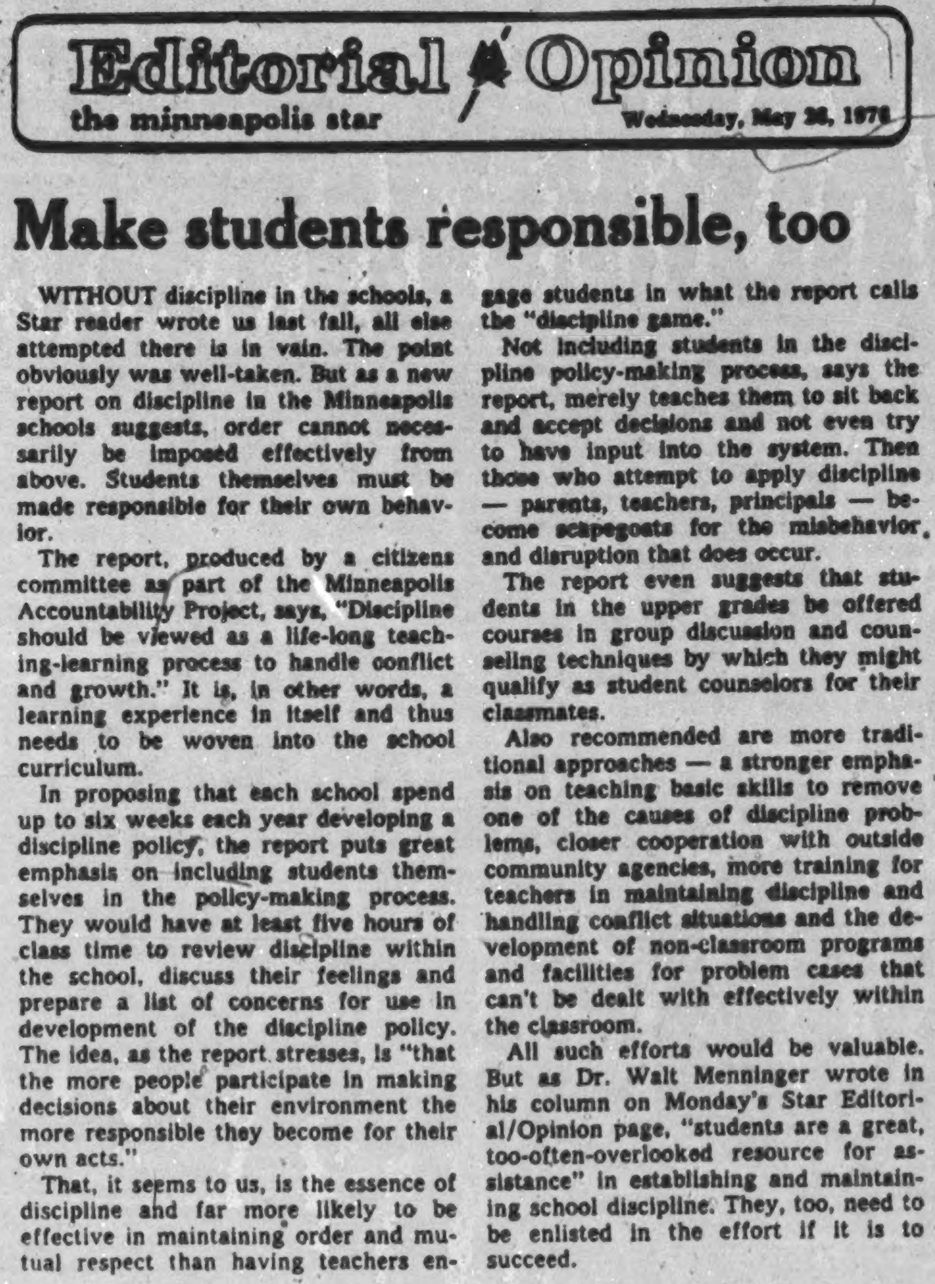
Minneapolis
Tribune
Monday,
March 31, 1975

During its three-year life, the Minneapolis Accountability Project has produced detailed, objective studies of the city's public schools and recommended ways to improve their programs and procedures. The broadly based project, open to any interested citizen, has dealt with such issues as grading and testing, instruction in basic skills and ways to assure that each school's curriculum reflects the needs of the community it serves and at the same time meets city-wide goals and standards.

Up to now, the project has been sponsored by the city school system, but funded — with money appropriated by the Legislature — by the Minnesota Council on Quality Education. That arrangement has enabled the project to work closely with the schools, but retain a high degree of independence. With the end of the initial three-year period, however, that arrangement is also ending, since the Council on Quality Education is designed to fund innovative demonstration projects rather than ongoing programs.

The project, as a result, is turning to the public schools for support — a maximum of $32,000 for next year — so that it can carry on its work. Some of the independence would be lost that way, but those involved in the project are confident that the large number of participating citizens would prevent domination by school officials and that the project's ability to select its own areas of study and to make objective — even critical — evaluations wouldn't be compromised. We're inclined to agree. Anyone who shows up becomes part of a project study committee, and the work of an organization that open can't be restricted by outside pressures very easily.

In the last three years, the project has demonstrated that it can get a large, diverse number of citizens — some of them initially critical of the schools — involved in making constructive evaluations and suggestions. As an ongoing organization with a small staff, it has been able to follow up its studies in continuing exchanges with school officials. Most important, it has shown that volunteer citizens can make valuable contributions toward helping the schools do the best possible job of serving the people of Minneapolis. It's worth keeping a project like that going. We hope the money to do so can be made available.



Editorial Opinion
the minneapolis star
Wednesday, May 26, 1976

Make students responsible, too

WITHOUT discipline in the schools, a Star reader wrote us last fall, all else attempted there is in vain. The point obviously was well-taken. But as a new report on discipline in the Minneapolis schools suggests, order cannot necessarily be imposed effectively from above. Students themselves must be made responsible for their own behavior.

The report, produced by a citizens committee as part of the Minneapolis Accountability Project, says, "Discipline should be viewed as a life-long teaching-learning process to handle conflict and growth." It is, in other words, a learning experience in itself and thus needs to be woven into the school curriculum.

In proposing that each school spend up to six weeks each year developing a discipline policy, the report puts great emphasis on including students themselves in the policy-making process. They would have at least five hours of class time to review discipline within the school, discuss their feelings and prepare a list of concerns for use in development of the discipline policy. The idea, as the report stresses, is "that the more people participate in making decisions about their environment the more responsible they become for their own acts."

That, it seems to us, is the essence of discipline and far more likely to be effective in maintaining order and mutual respect than having teachers engage students in what the report calls the "discipline game."

Not including students in the discipline policy-making process, says the report, merely teaches them to sit back and accept decisions and not even try to have input into the system. Then those who attempt to apply discipline — parents, teachers, principals — become scapegoats for the misbehavior and disruption that does occur.

The report even suggests that students in the upper grades be offered courses in group discussion and counseling techniques by which they might qualify as student counselors for their classmates.

Also recommended are more traditional approaches — a stronger emphasis on teaching basic skills to remove one of the causes of discipline problems, closer cooperation with outside community agencies, more training for teachers in maintaining discipline and handling conflict situations and the development of non-classroom programs and facilities for problem cases that can't be dealt with effectively within the classroom.

All such efforts would be valuable. But as Dr. Walt Menninger wrote in his column on Monday's Star Editorial/Opinion page, "students are a great, too-often-overlooked resource for assistance" in establishing and maintaining school discipline. They, too, need to be enlisted in the effort if it is to succeed.

Project costs and replication were studied by the third year evaluators also. They estimated that another district would need to incur about 66% of the Minneapolis project budget in order to start up a similar project, at the same level of activity. Regarding replication, the evaluators reported:

> It is the belief that any school district would profit from this type of project. However, in many small communities, the School Board is actually engaged in the same kinds of activities. It should also be kept in mind that where funds come from may have a bearing on the Committees. Committees with direct funding from the School Board may find it extremely difficult to point out the district's shortcomings.

Unfortunately, there was no external evaluation of the project during its fourth, and last year. In the next section, an assessment of the implementation of the project's recommendations is presented. It should be noted, however, that this assessment was made by school personnel and is thus not a completely independent review.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, an attempt is made to describe the status of each of the ninety-five recommendations made by the five Accountability Project study committees completed prior to 1976. Generally, status is described as of August 1976, although in a couple of cases major activities which have occurred since that date are noted.

This review was prepared by a member of the MPS Research and Evaluation Department who had no previous contact with the project. His review was based on interviews and correspondence with administrators and committee members, and an analysis of official documents and proceedings related to the recommendations.[3]

Table 2, on page 36, gives an estimate of the status of the recommendations as of August 1976. Because the status of these recommendations may change daily, it is unlikely that the table will be accurate at the time this report is read. Also, some recommendations did not lend themselves to a ready assessment of implementation. For example, when would one be satisfied that community reactions to the existing curriculum has been "compiled?" Recommen-

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[3] The authors wish to acknowledge the assistance of Thomas McCormick in preparing this section of the report.

Table 2

An Estimate of the Number of Accountability Project Recommendations Implemented as of August 1976

Number of Recommendations:

Committee	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	Underterminedᵃ	Total
Pupil Progress Reporting	11	7	5	2	25
Teacher Skills	0	13	0	8	21
Basic Skills	4	4	10	4	22
Curriculum Development	8	5	3	1	17
Community Participation	0	7	1	2	10
All Committees[b]	23	36	19	17	95
Percentage	24%	38%	20%	18%	100%

[a] The status of undetermined recommendations includes those for which sufficient information was not available and those for which an estimate of implementation could not be made due to the vagueness of the language of the recommendation.

[b] The report on Discipline, completed in June 1976, is not included because its recent completion date made it unlikely that implementation could have occurred at the time of this analysis.

dations of this type are labelled "Undertermined" in Table 2. Also called "Undertermined" were those recommendations for which we simply could not find sufficient information to make a determination of current status.

"Implemented" recommendations were those for which there appeared to be substantial, replicable evidence. "Not implemented" recommendations were those which were either formally rejected or for which no evidence existed that they were under active consideration. Recommendations "Under Consideration" were for which a clear assignment had been made for someone to review the recommendations and report back to a higher authority. Care should be taken to not attribute all implemented recommendations solely to the Accountability Project. Obviously, many factors and sources of information are considered when making educational decisions.

Given the judgmental aspects and the state of flux of the response to these recommendations, it is unlikely that all readers will agree with these estimates of implementation. Despite these problems, some value may be derived from this review. First, it appears that a minimum of about one out of four recommendations has been implemented. Second, implementation is not directly related to the amount of time available to put the recommendations into action, e.g., Teacher Skills, one of the first topics studied, has made little impact relative to the impact made by some later studies. Third, recommendations of the Teacher Skills and Community Participation committees appear to have made little impact. Finally, at least one out of five, and perhaps as many as one out of three recommendations (if undetermined recommendations are included) are still being considered, including some recommendations made as early as 1972-73.

Observations made by study committee chairpersons (see pps. 22-25) seem to agree, generally, with this assessment of implemented recommendations and thus contribute to the validity of the assessment.

Appendix D, page 57, gives details for each of the ninety-five recommendations made by the study committees. Some committees made only a few major recommendations, but encompassed several recommendations under a major heading. This review looks at each specific recommendation.

The "status" column presents a judgment of the recommendations implemented as of August 1976. Recommendations were judged either Implemented, Not Implemented, or still Under Consideration. Entries under the "Comments" column describe the sources of information.

In summary, this section has attempted to assess the impact of the Accountability Project by looking at it from various viewpoints. Project participants, news media, the Council on Quality Education, and an external evaluator reacted favorably to the project. The superintendent, whose term covered the first five studies, responded favorably. A number of committee recommendations were implemented and others are still being considered. Finally, the Minneapolis School Board gave evidence of its support for the project by funding it after state funding had to be discontinued.

On the negative side, a number of recommendations, particularly those from the Teacher Skills and Community Participation committees, have not been implemented. Also, the survey of members suggests that the project was not unusually successful in involving large numbers of "grass roots" community people.

PRESENT STATUS OF THE PROJECT

The Minneapolis Accountability Project was discontinued in June 1976. The Minneapolis School Board, faced with a five million dollar budget cut, did not grant the $20,000 requested for project continuation. (Some project advisory board members felt that a request should not be made to the school board since approval would take funds away from other school programs. The majority, however, argued that community evaluation of school programs was needed more than ever in view of the anticipated cuts.)

Attempts to obtain private funding were also fruitless. One private foundation argued that funding from public sources, specifically the school board, would be more appropriate. This foundation also indicated that the Accountability Project was in competition for funds with the Citizen's Committee on Public Education (CCPE), and that a merger of the two organizations would enhance the fund raising possibilities of both.

After several meetings, the two organizations agreed that the basic interest of the two groups could be maintained under a merger. Despite this effort, funds could not be obtained and on June 30, 1976, the project closed its doors. Because of continuing public interest, the CCPE agreed to serve as disseminator for project reports and as an information center for the project.

Two rather significant events have taken place since the project officially went out of business. First, Chapter 271 of the State Omnibus Education Bill of 1976 was enacted and transmitted to the educational community. This bill, commonly called the PER bill, requires school districts to involve the community in Planning, Evaluating, and Reporting on educational programs. Legislative debate during the session which enacted the bill indicated that:

> Public support of our schools and effectiveness of educational programs can be further enchanced by engaging in comprehensive planning, evaluating the results of our efforts and sharing both those processes with the communities we serve.[4]

Thus, the PER bill is the legal enactment of the philosophy of the Minneapolis Accountability Project. The bill requires school districts to implement many of the recommendations made by the Accountability study committees, particularly those of the Curriculum Development and Community Participation committees. The school administration has appointed a strategy committee to suggest ideas on how to begin to meet this new legal requirement. Two community members who served on the Accountability Project Advisory Board have been asked to serve on this strategy committee.

The second significant event was the adoption of the Discipline committee's recommendations--with minor changes--by the Minneapolis School Board in December 1976. This was the first project report officially "approved" by the school board. Previous reports had been presented to the board by the project and were then referred to the school administraton for review. Project staff then communicated directly with school administrative staff. In retrospect, this procedure appears to have been a tactical error on the part of the project. The Community Participation study is a good case in point. This committee presented its recommendations to the school board in the spring of 1975. The report was referred to the superintendent--who resigned shortly thereafter. An area superintendent was then given the responsibility of drafting a response and he also resigned. (Both of these people denied a cause and effect relationship.) His replacement assumed the task, but she was soon reassigned. As of this writing, the response to the report is still being considered. Possibly the process could have been speeded up if the project had maintained formal report lines with the school board--although there is no doubt that the unforeseen staff changes contributed much to the delay. Staff turnover does not appear to have played a part in the lack of response to the Teacher Skills recommendations, however.

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[4] Memo to superintendents of local school districts from Von Valletta, Deputy Commissioner-Operations and Greg Waddick, Assistant Commissioner-Planning and Development, Minnesota State Department of Education, June 1976.

Several factors may have played a part in the acceptance of the Discipline committee recommendations. First, the committee was the only committee directly funded by the Minneapolis School Board. As such, school board members may have had a greater personal interest in the outcome of the project. Second, a school board member who had served as a project advisory board member prior to her election stimulated reaction to the recommendations. Finally, the new superintendent, Raymond G. Arveson, acted aggressively to pursue the committee's recommendation. Although the project had ended about the time he was hired, the superintendent initiated a meeting with former Discipline committee members in order to gain greater insight into their recommendations. He has also indicated that he will review all of the Accountability Project reports.

Thus, it appears that the project is officially dead but unofficially very healthy. Many of its participants remain interested and active in school affairs. Some recommendations have been enacted. Other recommendations have been legislated. Others are still being considered. It may be true that "...the mechanisms for implementing change in a large institution move very, very slowly." Nevertheless, we think that the Minneapolis Accountability Project helped to implement change at a faster rate.

COMMENT

In this section we try to tie up some loose ends. We talk about those things which made the project unique. Some benefits of the project are discussed and a few recommendations for other school districts considering the Minneapolis Accountability approach are given.

UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

Was the Accountability Project unique? We think so. We think it was unique in some very simple ways. Simple, but important.

Many school study committees which involve citizen participation are based on the premise that, "We have a problem and we want you to help us study it and find a solution." The Accountability Project operated on the premise that, "If you tell us which problem you want to study, we will help you to study it and find a solution." The project is thus unique in allowing the community to determine the problem it wishes to address, rather than assigning the problem to it. Also, it is, in a sense, offering to help the community improve its schools rather than asking the community to help the schools improve themselves.

Dr. Kairies of the Council on Quality Education suggests another unique feature of the project. It comprised, perhaps, "...the first attempt to formally and systematically involve interested lay citizens in educational evaluations." Other school district research departments may have involved citizens in evaluation efforts from time to time, but the Accountability Project institutionalized the procedure.

The project was open to all comers. Some other projects or committees may operate on the same basis, but the Accountability Project advertised in the personals column of the newspapers. Simple? Yes. Unique? We think so.

Finally, the project operated independently. The idea is obvious. But remember, the project was, essentially, operated by the community with funds provided directly--or indirectly--by the school board for four years. Ninety-eight percent of the project participants ~~did~~ not feel that the project was a tool of the schools. The board and the school administration maintained a hands-off posture throughout the four years. Again, a simple concept. But is unique for a school district to devote funds to a community group so that the group can evaluate some unknown aspects of the district's operation. Some people see this approach as akin to paying your own hangman for his services. We prefer to see it in the same light as a medical check-up.

Independence, openness, opportunity for involvement, choice. These words sum up the simple basic concepts which made the Accountability Project unique. The concepts are not unique; putting them into operation was.

BENEFITS FROM THE ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

Benefits derived from the Accountability Project are most often described in terms of the number of recommendations implemented by the school district. Naturally, these are important. The project would have been a little value if all its recommendations had been ignored. But there are other benefits. The project director has consistently maintained that these benefits are more important than the implementation of all the recommendations. Because of a large number of "fringe" benefits, they are simply listed:

1. Attention was focused on educational topics which were important to the community.
2. Emphasis was placed on a "community" involvement in school program evaluation using the broadest possible definition of "community," i.e., not only parents, teachers, and students, but non-parents, administrators, and any interested citizen.
3. Several hundred people became well informed about specific aspects of the school district.
4. Some critics of the schools became advocates after they had studied an educational program and what the schools were doing about it.
5. A substantial body of resource materials bearing on six educational topics was compiled and is available for continuing study.
6. "It got people involved that might not otherwise have been involved." (Nathan Miller, Study Committee Chairperson)
7. It permitted "...those who thought themselves outside of the 'system' a forum for their concerns. Without such a vent, the schools would appear closed, and the outsiders would be suspicious." (C. J. Howard, Study Committee Chairperson)
8. It obtained much favorable publicity for the school district for its willingness to be self-critical.
9. It demonstrated that the school district was willing to listen to the community--even if it didn't always agree with it or respond to it with the desired speed.
10. It was "...extremely helpful in improving the general educational and human relations and communications systems between and among students, parents, faculty, staff and citizens." (John B. Davis, Jr., former superintendent)
11. "Perhaps the contacts and cross education of the participants will affect attitudes and future changes in our school system...in future years." (C. J. Howard, Study Committee Chairperson)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

For those districts considering a community evaluation approach we can offer a few suggestions. Obviously, few districts will have the same characteristics as Minneapolis. Therefore, we have concentrated on concepts which should be relevant for any district, regardless of size, budget or location.

1. The key concept of a community-operated, school-supported project must be maintained.
2. Selection of the study topics must be solely in the hands of the community.

4. The study committee procedures have proven their value and are recommended. However, they depend greatly on adequate staffing and access to adequate clerical and printing assistance. If minutes and resource materials must be mailed, postage can be a heavy expense. Details of the study committee procedures are given in the Project's Third Year Report.
5. We recommend a paid staff. Staff may be employed part time and may be school employees, but they must have independence to serve the committee without interference.
6. Advisory board members should be predominately non-school persons.
7. No restrictions on participation on the study committees should be made. This procedure might attract people with extreme viewpoints, naysayers and disrupters, but the long study process soon bores them, or they cancel themselves out, or they learn.
8. Maintain a long study process. The problems aren't simple. They need a lot of study. It takes a long time for people to zero in on the problem. We recommend a minimum of six months for the study process. Anything shorter than that and you'll simply have your typical school board shouters and stompers.
9. Maintain formal communications with the school board for followup purposes.

We make no recommendations about the use of school facilities for meetings nor direct funding by school boards. In Minneapolis school facilities were used and school board funding was provided during the fourth year of the project. To our knowledge, no problems resulted from this school support. In fact, the acceptance of the Discipline report may have been increased by it. We do not know, however, what impact the close ties of the school board may have had if the project had not first established its autonomy in a non-school building with funding from the state during its first three years.

Whether a district should initiate a community evaluation approach or not is conjectural. Unfortunately, those districts which should benefit most from community evaluation are probably those which are most afraid of asking for it. They don't want to pay the hangman. Regardless, they will get community evaluation. But it will be uninformed, unsystematic, and probably unprofitable. The argument for the Accountability Project approach is that as long as the community is going to be critical of school programs, it should be helped to base its criticism on a thorough study and knowledge of the programs. We think the result of that approach is profitable for all.

APPENDIX A

MEMBERS OF ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD
1972-1976

Appendix A

MEMBERS OF ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD
1972-1976

Information presented for each advisory board member is, in order: The part of the city in which they lived; race--or ethnic background; sex; occupation; involvement in the Accountability Project.

Numbers under the person's name indicate the years in which they served on the advisory board.

1.	Marty Anderson 73-74, 74-75	Northeast, White, female, homemaker, Pupil Progress member, Basic Skills chair
2.	Gertrude Buckanaga 75-76	North, American Indian, female, counselor, School Discipline member
3.	Roger Buffalohead 72-73, 73-74, 74-75	Southeast, American Indian, male, college professor
4.	Gwendolyn Clark 75-76	North, Black, female, high school student
5.	Richard Curtin 72-73, 73-74	South, White, male, lawyer, board chair (73-74)
6.	Keith Davidson 74-75, 75-76	South, White, male, engineer, Curriculum Development Procedures member, Community Participation member, School Discipline membe
7.	S. Bill Doi 75-76	South, Asian American, male, art director, School Discipline member
8.	Paula Goldberg 73-74, 74-75, 75-76	Southwest, White, female, homemaker, Pupil Progress member, Basic Skills member
9.	Alfredo Gonzalez 74-75, 75-76	North, Chicano, male, college instructor, Curriculum Development Procedures member
10.	Beverly Hawkins 73-74	South, Black, female, Director of Education-Minneapolis Urban League
11.	James Hetland 72-73, 73-74, 74-75, 75-76	Southwest, White, male, Director of Community Affairs-First National Bank of Minneapolis
12.	C. Joseph Howard 72-73, 73-74, 74-75	South, White, male, independent businessman, Teacher Utilization chair
13.	Iris Kangas 74-75, 75-76	Southeast, White, female, homemaker and community aide, Teacher Utilization member, Community Participation assistant chair
14.	Janis Keller 72-73	North, White, female, homemaker

Appendix A (continued)

Mary Kroening 75-76	North, White, female, high school student
Ep Law 75-76	South, Black, male, teacher
Dot Lilja 74-75, 75-76	West, White, female, homemaker, Basic Skills member Community Participation chair
Diane Loeffler 74-75, 75-76	Northeast, White, female, administrative asst., Curriculum Development Procedures member, Community Participation member
Betty McCabe 72-73	Northeast, White, female, community school coordinator and aide, Pupil Progress member
Nathan Miller 72-73, 73-74, 74-75	Southwest, White, male, industrialist, (former director Urban Coalition), Pupil Progress chair
Maxine Nathanson 72-73, 73-74, 74-75 75-76	Southwest, White, female, director of Citizens Committee on Public Education, board chair (72-73), member all 6 committees
Betty Neumann 73-74, 74-75, 75-76	Southeast, White, female, teacher's aide, Teacher Utilization member, Basic Skills member, Community Participation member School Discipline member, board chair (74-75)
Henry Nowicki 74-75, 75-76	Southeast, White, male, director of Curriculum Development Procedures member
Gerd Raich 73-74	Southwest, White, female, homemaker, Teacher Utilization member
Virginia Richardson 74-75, 75-76	South, Black, female, homemaker, Community Participation member, School Discipline member
Dorene Scriven 72-73	Southwest, White, female, homemaker
James Small 72-73, 73-74, 74-75 75-76	South, Black, male, engineer, Curriculum Development Procedures chair
Jane Starr 72-73	Southeast, White, female, homemaker, Community Participation member
Jan Wilson 73-74, 74-75	North, White, female, homemaker
Frank Zaragoza	Southeast, Chicano, male, union organizer
Madge Zietlow 75-76	South, White, female, word processor, Community Participation member, School Discipline chair

Appendix A (continued)

Project Staff

Janet Hively - Coordinator	December 1972 - December 1976
Susan Hastay - Assistant Coordinator	December 1972 - July 1974
Tracey Walen - Assistant Coordinator/ Coordinator	August 1974 - June 1975; December 1976 - June 1976
Karel Fuller - Assistant Coordinator	August 1975 - June 1976

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE TO THE MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL BOARD AND A SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix B

STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE TO THE MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL BOARD AND A SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

TO: The Minneapolis Board of Education
The Minneapolis Superintendent of Schools
The School Community

FROM: The Accountability Project School Discipline Committee

"There can be order without freedom but there can be no freedom without order." John Gardner's quote speaks to our topic of School Discipline. Organizations or groups of people cannot function effectively without internal discipline, based on mutual understanding of rights and responsibilities.

Discipline should be viewed as a life-long teaching-learning process to handle conflict and growth. Discipline recognizes values and imposes restraints. There can be self-discipline and group discipline. Discipline involves instruction and exercise designed to train to acceptable conduct or action. Implicit in such instruction is a recognition of human needs as well as the inherent rights of each individual.

Our Committee has heard and read many things about truancy, disruption and violence throughout the country. The picture is not pleasant. We live in a time when violence is part of our day-to-day existence from the international level to the neighborhoods. We live in a time when abuse of power has led to a lack of respect for authority. We have been informed that:

..Students and teachers are locked together in a self-defeating context of suspicion, hostility and hurt.

..There are teachers who are afraid of students, of not being able to deal with students, and of what their peers and principals might say if they ask for help.

..There are students who are afraid of physical and verbal abuse from other students during the school day.

..There are students whose spirits are crushed under physical, mental and attitudinal abuse. Many students feel that their integrity is being violated.

..Many children spend wasted time while classmates and teachers are playing the discipline game.

..Too often teachers perpetuate rules without knowing why they do so, what purposes the rules serve or what the total effect is on either the class as a whole or on individual students.

..The days of "in loco parentis" are past. The public cries for stronger discipline. The courts are upholding students rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution.

A new respect for authority must be developed along with the respect for people's rights. We can reaffirm old values without returning to old ways. We believe that the more people participate in making decisions about their environment the more responsible they become for their acts. Individuals must have a sense of power over their own lives. Shared decision-making is essential for cooperation. Democracy should be practiced within the educational system.

School should be a place where students learn to understand and cope with conflict and how to change society. Some students resort to violence, drop out of school or drop into drugs because they have not learned this. There must be an atmosphere of open communication, self-discipline and clearly understood rules that will enable both the school staff and the student to develop to their fullest potential.

Schools are not able to solve all discipline problems, but they are forced, through laws for compulsory education and exacting regulations for suspensions, to spend a great deal of time in an effort to handle discipline problems. A study on compulsory education should be undertaken. While many discipline problems affecting students originate outside the school, child and family crises often surface at school. Even though the Committee was charged with evaluating school discipline, much time was spent dealing with references to factors outside the school--i.e., inappropriate discipline at home, "dysfunctioning families," and everchanging social values.

It is most difficult to make recommendations in the area of school discipline. There is no one set of rules that solves all problems. There is no one solution that meets all needs. We came to understand that each school building has a different population with different characteristics and different expectations to service.

We are aware that the Minneapolis Public Schools are trying to provide a productive learning environment. Many policies and programs are well deserving of support. Many teachers and schools have provided a healthy climate in which education can take place. Excellent alternatives have been provided to meet students' needs, as described in our Background Summary.

Nevertheless, there are administrators, teachers and students whose behavior distracts from the learning climate. This report includes information concerning problems, policies and procedures affecting discipline in the Minneapolis Schools. Our recommendations, based on specific concerns, give more freedom to and demand more responsibility of the school community. These recommendations are necessarily broad-based, but we have tried to make our objectives clear and measurable. The steps we propose will need constant review and revision in order to be successful. Discipline is a never-ending process. Some of the recommendations will take time and money. We know the arguments about "not enough," but money and time are already being spent in dealing with the problems in the classroom, with rehabilitation, with vandalism and with frustrated staff and students.

We urge the Minneapolis Board of Education to give this report a careful reading and to implement its recommendations.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Each school should have a written discipline policy developed by the school community. Time must be set aside to develop policy during the first six weeks of the school year. The development of discipline must become an ongoing process and be part of the everyday curriculum of the school. The principal of each school should be responsible for carrying out this recommendation.

2. The Minneapolis Public Schools must institute a strong curriculum which addresses behavior problems by integrating opportunities for students to develop abilities to live and work cooperatively with others and opportunities for students to develop competencies in basic skills - two of the system's stated goals.

3. The Minneapolis Public Schools should increase cooperation with community agencies, both public and private, which can provide supportive services and technical assistance to school administration and faculty.

4. The Minneapolis Public Schools should provide opportunities for staff to increase their skills in the areas of discipline.

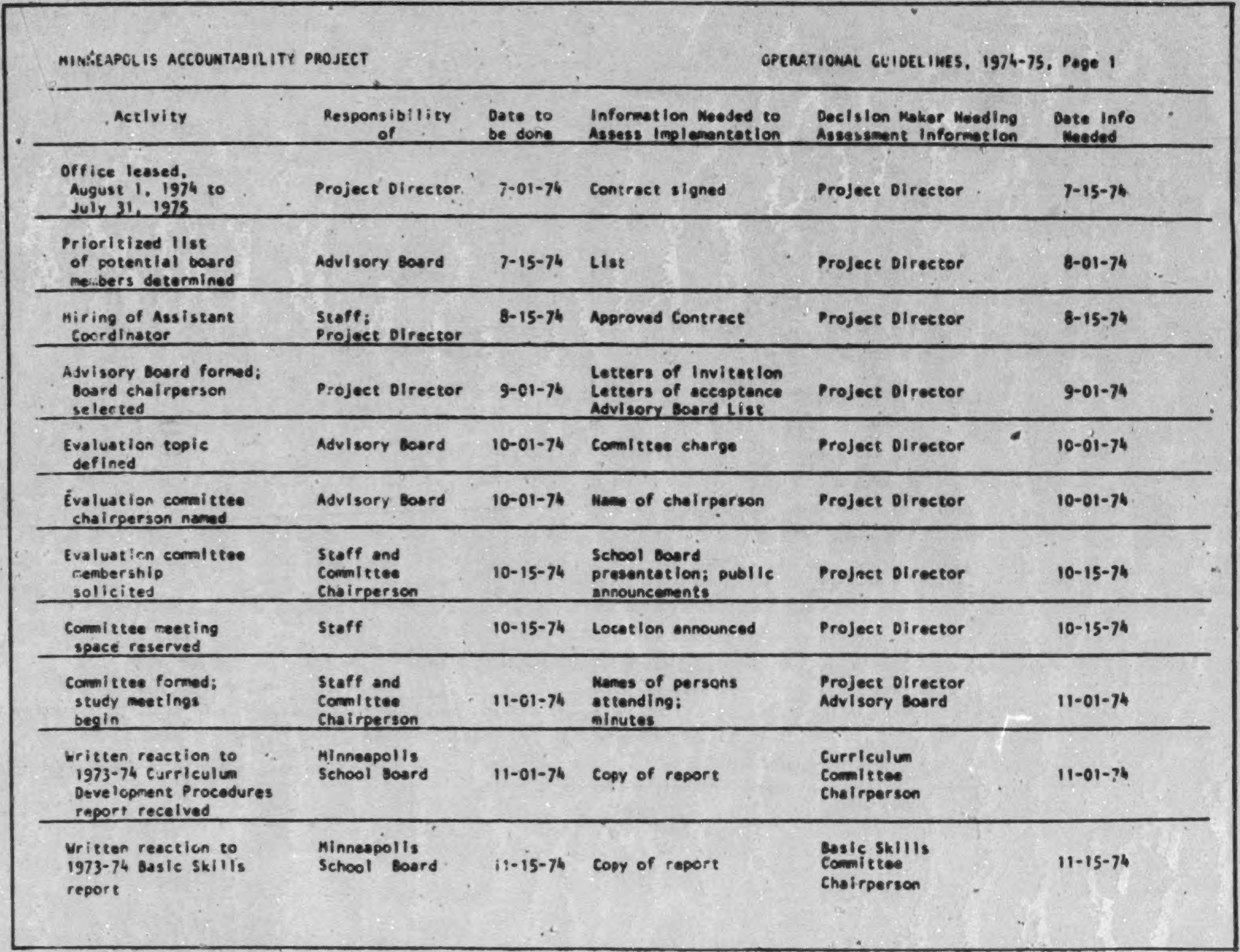
5. The Board of Education must assure every student the right and opportunity to secure an education without undue classroom disruption. Programs and resources must be available outside the classroom when it is not possible to solve disruptive problems in the classroom.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE PLANNING AND EVALUATION FORMS USED BY ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT STAFF

Appendix C

SAMPLE PLANNING AND EVALUATION FORMS USED BY ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT STAFF



MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES, 1974-75, Page 1

Activity	Responsibility of	Date to be done	Information Needed to Assess Implementation	Decision Maker Needing Assessment Information	Date Info Needed
Office leased, August 1, 1974 to July 31, 1975	Project Director	7-01-74	Contract signed	Project Director	7-15-74
Prioritized list of potential board members determined	Advisory Board	7-15-74	List	Project Director	8-01-74
Hiring of Assistant Coordinator	Staff; Project Director	8-15-74	Approved Contract	Project Director	8-15-74
Advisory Board formed; Board chairperson selected	Project Director	9-01-74	Letters of invitation Letters of acceptance Advisory Board List	Project Director	9-01-74
Evaluation topic defined	Advisory Board	10-01-74	Committee charge	Project Director	10-01-74
Evaluation committee chairperson named	Advisory Board	10-01-74	Name of chairperson	Project Director	10-01-74
Evaluation committee membership solicited	Staff and Committee Chairperson	10-15-74	School Board presentation; public announcements	Project Director	10-15-74
Committee meeting space reserved	Staff	10-15-74	Location announced	Project Director	10-15-74
Committee formed; study meetings begin	Staff and Committee Chairperson	11-01-74	Names of persons attending; minutes	Project Director Advisory Board	11-01-74
Written reaction to 1973-74 Curriculum Development Procedures report received	Minneapolis School Board	11-01-74	Copy of report	Curriculum Committee Chairperson	11-01-74
Written reaction to 1973-74 Basic Skills report	Minneapolis School Board	11-15-74	Copy of report	Basic Skills Committee Chairperson	11-15-74

Sample Page from Operational Guidelines

Appendix C (continued)

SAMPLE MEETING EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE *Please fill out at the end of the meeting and place in the box labelled "Questionnaires" on the resource table.*

	Not at all	Somewhat	Completely
The Chair:			
Clearly defined committee goals	1	2	3
Kept questions to the point	1	2	3
Invited criticism of his/her own ideas and actions	1	2	3
As a Committee Participant, I:			
Feel that I have a role to play in the committee's work	1	2	3
Feel that my concerns are listened to	1	2	3
Am satisfied with my level of participation	1	2	3
On the whole, I was satisfied with the meeting tonight	1	2	3
On the whole, the committee worked well together tonight	1	2	3

Suggestions for future meetings:

SAMPLE YEAR-END EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDY COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

1. On which of the following committees did you serve? (check as many as apply)

____ Pupil Progress Reporting Committee

____ Teacher Utilization Committee

____ Basic Skills Committee

____ Curriculum Development Committee

____ Community Participation Committee

____ Advisory Board

2. How are you involved with the Minneapolis Public Schools? (check as many as apply)

____ Paid employee

____ Parent of MPS student

____ MPS student

____ Former MPS student

____ Volunteer worker

____ None of these

3. Which of these statements do you think best describes the Accountability Project?

____ It was an effective way for the community to influence the schools.

____ It was an honest but ineffective attempt to influence the schools through community participation.

____ It was a tool of the schools which really did not serve the public.

____ Other: ____

____

4. Did the recommendations of the committee on which you served represent the ideas of the majority of the committee members?

____ Yes ____ No

Comment: ____

____

5. In the final analysis, has the Accountability Project helped to improve education in Minneapolis?

____ Yes ____ Probably yes ____ Probably no ____ No

Appendix C (continued)

SAMPLE YEAR-END EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDY COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

6. What changes in the Accountability Project's procedures would you suggest?

7. How do you feel about your own involvement in the Accountability Project?

____ Very Effective　____ Somewhat Effective　____ A little Effective　____ Not at all Effective

8. Should the Accountability Project be continued?

____ Yes　____ No

APPENDIX D

AN ESTIMATE OF THE STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT AS OF AUG 1976

Appendix D

AN ESTIMATE OF THE STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE MINNEAPOLIS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT AS OF AUG 1976

Recommendation	Status			Comments[a]
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING 1972-73 (Presented to the Minneapolis Board of Education June 1973)				
1. We recommend to the School Board that every teacher be required to state specific and detailed course objectives. Pupil progress should be evaluated and reported according to those objectives. Course objectives and techniques of measurement must be clearly defined at the beginning of the course and thoroughly communicated to students and parents.		X		(Source: Memo from Bill Phillips to Tom McCormick 7/19/76)
2. We recommend that School Board policy encourage individual teacher variation in statement of objectives and in techniques of measurement.		X		A committee was convened by the City-Wide Advisory Committee (CWAC) to see what changes teachers wanted to make on report forms. The committee decided this was not an issue and made no recommendation. No School Board policy reflecting this recommendation has been implemented. (Source: Phillips memo and Minneapolis School Board Policies-Bylaws-Regulations)
Difference in techniques of measurement, however, must not imply that greater value is assigned to any one subject than to another. In no case should grade level norms be used to report individual achievement on progress report forms.			X	MPS will continue to eliminate grade level norms when reporting individual achievement. (Source: Memo from John B. Davis to Nate Miller 8/14/74)
3. We recommend to the School Board that all teachers establish individual objectives according to the students' level of achievement when entering the class. Teachers should set tasks leading to course objectives to recognize the wide range of differences between high and low achievers.				No Rating
4. We endorse the School Board's plan for a city-wide alternatives system on the elementary level. We recommend that the School Board give further consideration to expanding the alternatives model to the secondary level.	X			Alternative models are continuing to be developed K-12 citywide. (Source: Phillips memo of 7/19/76)
5. We recommend that the School Board redefine the limits on the Credit/No Credit option in senior high schools.	X			A committee is studying this issue among other credit issues. (Source: Phillips memo)
6. We recommend that the only time limitation on election of the Credit/No Credit option be determined by the office's record keeping needs.	X			Time constraints on the Credit/No Credit option are standardized. (Source: Phillips memo)
7. We recommend to the School Board that recognition for extra credit work not be recorded with grade symbols.	X			(Source: Phillips memo)
8. We recommend that the School Board abolish citizenship grades, because there are no clear criteria for their use. Instead, space would be allowed on all report forms for the teacher to describe as simply and as objectively or specifically as possible whatever he feels it necessary to report (both positive and negative) about the student's social behavior and emotional development.		X		CWAC committee felt there was no strong feeling among teachers to delete citizenship grades on the report card. (Source: Phillips memo)

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[a] Names mentioned in the comments column refer to MPS administrators. Much source information is based on internal memos from these administrators.

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING (continued)				
9. We recommend to the School Board that use of standardized group ability tests to establish student potential be discontinued. Group achievement tests may be used as alternative diagnostic tools. Individual diagnosis through use of individual ability tests should be continued, with the knowledge of the parent.	X			MPS has discontinued administering group intelligenc tests on required city-wid basis. (Source: Davis memo
10. We recommend that the School Board give consideration to reducing the sharp differences between grading systems at the elementary and secondary level.		X		CWAC made decision not to recommend a change. (Sourc Phillips memo)
11. We recommend that the School Board extend its stated policy (#5124) on reporting to parents to stress the system's obligation to report regularly to students at all grade levels. We recommend that progress reporting to students include the following four ingredients: A. Clear statement of objectives, how these will be measured and what levels of performance will correspond to what specific grades (if grades are used). B. Meaningful written or oral communication by the teacher to the student, considering strengths, weaknesses and possible direction for improvement, with respect to the specific course objectives. C. Student self-evaluation of strengths, weaknesses and directions for improvement, both with respect to the teacher's objectives and with respect to the student's own learning goals. D. Time for teacher and student to read each other's evaluations and engage in dialogue based on this sharing of perceptions. This need may be satisfied by implementation of recommendation #12.		X		CWAC didn't make any recommendation. Board policy #5330 (formerly #5124) has not been extended as recommended. (Sources: Phillips memo and Board Policies)
12. We recommend that the School Board require two parent-student-teacher conferences a year as standard reporting procedure, K-12.		X		School Board Policy #5530 unchanged. (Source: Board Policies)
13. We recommend that the School Board establish an ongoing program for educating parents to look at new ways of evaluating progress and changing curriculum.			X	In the 1976 Minnesota Education Bill (House File 19 districts are urged to for curriculum advisory committ which would include parent
14. We recommend that the school administration implement the following specific changes in the procedure of preparing written progress reports:				
A. Parents should be allowed the opportunity for immediate response to a written grade report. Either space for comment and suggestions should be allotted on the card or a sheet should accompany the card for fill-in and return.	X			(Source: Davis memo)
B. Every written report should include space for the teacher to suggest remedial measures with which the family can help the student's progress.	X			Where appropriate, teacher will suggest remedial measures. (Source: Davis memo)
C. Only positive behaviors should be used in all checklists, as used now on the Experimental Elementary Report Form.			X	(Source: Davis memo)

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status Implemented	 Not Implemented	 Under Consideration	Comments
PUPIL PROGRESS REPORTING (continued)				
D. Because standardized test results are difficult to understand without professional interpretation, test scores should not be shown on written reports. Instead, parents should be informed that standardized tests have been given, and that interpretation of an individual's test results is available from the teacher.			X	This is the practice in most schools but all schools will be encouraged to adopt the procedure suggested in the recommendation. (Source: Davis memo)
E. The system for allotting honor points should be explained on the secondary report form.	X			(Source: Davis memo)
F. Secondary report forms should be mailed home as a courtesy to students and parents.			X	Many secondary school reports are mailed home. More reports will be mailed as funds permit. (Source: Davis memo)
G. Teachers should fill out reports on other than instructional time.				(Source: Davis memo) No Rating
15. We recommend that the School Board should grant total access to all student files to students and to parents or legal guardians. We further recommend that the School Board should prohibit access to these records by anyone other than authorized school personnel and the student and parents, unless the permission of the student or his legal guardian has been received. If legislation is needed to develop and protect the right of privacy announced in this policy, than it should be sought and endorsed by the Board of Education.	X			Board Policy #5350 and MPS Regulation #5350A are in accord with this recommendation. Minnesota Right to Know Laws 1974 Chapter 479 and federal legislation, Protection of the Rights and Privacy of Parents and Students Public Law 93-380 mandated a change. (Sources: Board Policies and Department of Guidance and Assessment Services)
16. We recommend to the School Board that all subjective material be eliminated from a student's files before he enters junior high school, and again before he enters senior high school. At graduation, only the objective data required for further education and employment should be preserved.	X			(Source: Phillips memo)
17. We recommend to the School Board that long absences should be coded for cause on student records.		X		Absences of an extended nature are recorded on pupil's health record. (Source: Davis memo)
18. We recommend that the School Board incorporate into the 11th and 12th grade curriculum a program designed to assist students in the preparation of personal files for use in interviews for employment or for admission to educational institutions ...to include the following: A. A work folder sampling the best of a student's work, whether it be written papers, drawings, photographs or shop products, etc. B. A paper written by the student evaluating his scholastic performance and defining his goals, interests and strengths. C. Other materials beneficial to future employment or education including letters of recommendation from school staff, prior employers or community representatives.	X			This is an option available for students. (Source: Phillips memo)
TEACHER UTILIZATION PROCEDURES 1972-1973 (Presented to the Minneapolis Board of Education June 1973)				
1. The Committee recommends that the Board of Education provide each Minneapolis teacher with the tools to observe and evaluate his classroom performance.				No Rating

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
TEACHER UTILIZATION PROCEDURES (continued)				
The Committee recommends that a self-appraisal program be initiated as a one-year pilot project with the intent of implementing the program throughout the district as soon as practical if the pilot proves successful. The pilot program would be made available on a voluntary basis to the entire staff of one or more elementary and secondary schools. The teaching profession should be involved in the development of the project, with teachers comprising at least one-half of the planning committee.		X		The pilot project was not implemented because of an insufficient number of teacher volunteers. (Source: Fred Hayen, MPS Teacher Center)
2. The Committee recommends that the Board of Education establish system-wide procedures to provide continuous feedback to teachers from peers, students, parents and other members of the school-community.				
A. The Committee recommends that the Board of Education initiate a peer-assessment program on a pilot project basis in one of the Areas as soon as possible. The teaching profession should plan and administer the project.		X		(Source: Fred Hayen)
B. The Committee recommends that the Board of Education encourage use by teachers of student evaluation questionnaires for private assessment of the effects of the classroom presentations.		X		No Board policy encourages use of student evaluation. No system-wide, or even school-wide approach to student evaluation is used in MPS. (Sources: Board Policies and Lary Johnson, Research and Evaluation Department)
C. The Committee endorses use of the parent-student-teacher conference as a vehicle for parent feedback and recommends that the Board of Education encourage conferencing in both elementary and secondary schools.		X		Board Policy #5330 (reporting to parents) makes no mention of conferencing. MPS Regulation #5330A says at least one conference for each student in elementary school will be held each year. The regulation makes no mention of conferencing in secondary school. (Source: Board Policies)
3. Because the principal is not responsible for personnel evaluation of his building's staff, the Committee recommends that the Board of Education implement the following guidelines for evaluation.				
A. Teacher-principal conferences should be held at least twice a year.		X		Conferences are held three times a year for probationary teachers but conferences need not be held for tenured teachers. (Source: *Agreements, Policies and Administrative Regulations of the Minneapolis Public Schools*)
B. Materials discussed at the final conference each year should include, in addition to the principal's observation form, a written self-evaluation provided by the teacher, and peer assessment program results when available.		X		No self evaluation form is provided by the Personnel Department for use in the Minneapolis Public Schools (Source: Cory Nichols, Personnel Department)
C. Principals must receive continuous training in techniques of observation and evaluation.		X		Some principals receive training at MPS Teacher Center and through the Leadership Development Committee. (Sources: Fred Hayen and Three Year Report of the Minneapolis Accountability Project)

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
TEACHER UTILIZATION PROCEDURES (continued)				
4. The Committee recommends that the School Board develop procedures to allow every teacher to observe the classroom procedures of his peers, in order to gain new ideas and to enhance the observer's own classroom performance.		X		(Source: Board Policies)
5. The Committee recommends that the Board of Education establish procedures to further involve teachers in all administrative decisions which directly affect them. The Committee believes that such action would be consistent with the Board's program decentralizing administration, and would involve:				
A. Building-level decisions about personnel assignment.		X		The Personnel Department initially interviews teachers on the basis of state certification not because of a job description prepared by a school staff. When a vacancy occurs, particular staffing needs and qualifications are considered. There are no formal procedures ensuring teacher input. (Sources: Cory Nichols and The Use of Teachers' Skills in the Minneapolis Schools)
B. Building-level decisions concerning use of money for the classroom.				No Rating
C. Building-level staff development programs				No Rating Human Relations training in each school is an example of implementation of this recommendation.
D. Area-wide staff development programs				A North Area Center is planned to open by June 1977, the East Area Center serves four schools; there is no West Area Center. (Source: Fred Hayen) No Rating
6. The Committee recommends consideration by the Board of Education of teacher concern that lack of time occasioned by non-instructional duties and by attention to students with behavior problems is a primary obstacle to maximum effectiveness. The Committee suggests the following responses to this concern:				
A. Use of staff analysis on a pilot basis with volunteer schools to identify imbalance in work assignments.		X		Research and Evaluation Department records do not show that such a study has been done or is being done. (Source: Research and Evaluation Department)
B. Assignment of priority in allocation of resources to assist teachers to deal with "students who consume teacher time through daily disruption at the expense of the teaching process and the opportunities for learning by the majority of students."				No Rating

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendations	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
TEACHER UTILIZATION PROCEDURES (continued)				
7. The Committee recommends that the School Board institute the following programs and procedures to help provide a supportive community climate for its teaching staff:				
A. Increased and improved use of community resource volunteers by provision of additional information to school staff members.		X		The Community Resource Volunteer Program (CRV) has not been implemented at the secondary level because of budget cutbacks. (Source: Betty Jane Reed, CRV Director)
B. Increased publicity about professional growth courses open to community members.		X		
C. Designation of a communications specialist within each Area who will be available for assistance to parents, teachers, principals, students and school staff when a communications breakdown occurs.		X		
D. Use of designated parent volunteers to facilitate communication between school and community, particularly in inner-city secondary schools.				(Source: Three Year Report of the Minneapolis Accountability Project) No Rating
8. The Committee recommends that the Board of Education institute the following programs and procedures to help bridge the gap between teacher training institutions and the public school system.				
A. An internship program for students from teacher training institutions.				No Rating
B. Broadened use of faculty from teacher training institutions as participants in the day-to-day activities of the city's school system.				No Rating
BASIC SKILLS 1973-74 (Presented to the Minneapolis Board of Education June 1974)				
1. The Minneapolis Public Schools should use already available resources to assist parents in their important role in developing pre-school readiness related to basic skills instruction.				No Rating The administration is making efforts to implement this recommendation. HIPOG, WIPOG, the VIP program in the West Area, the Powderhorn Parent Project and the Parenting Center at North High are examples of implementation. (Source: Memo from Harry Vakos to Marty Anderson 11/26/74)
2. Every child should be screened for basic skill readiness at least one year before entrance into kindergarten. The Minneapolis Public Schools must assume responsibility for an early screening program.		X		Some individual projects and schools screen but there is no citywide effort. (Source: Vakos memo)
3. The Minneapolis Public Schools should broaden existing intervention programs and provide services for pre-school children and significant communications problems.			X	The State is developing a system for intervention which will be used by MPS.

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
BASIC SKILLS (continued)				
4. A continuous sequence of skills which must be mastered enroute to achieving basic skill competence should be defined by the Minneapolis Public Schools. Minimum Essentials in Reading similar to the system's Minimum Essentials in Basic Mathematical Knowledge should be stated.			X	Because of the selection of a new reading system in Minneapolis, a continuous sequence of skills development will evolve. (Source: Memo from Herb Karsten to Tracy Walen 6/25/76)
5. Individual objectives for basic skill learning should be established and written for each child by each teacher early in the school year, and transmitted to the child's parents. These objectives should follow the stated continuous progress sequence of skill development in reading, math and the language arts, and should be established until basic skill competence has been accomplished.			X	Selection of the new reading curriculum and development of a management system may lead to implementation in 1976-77. (Source: Karsten memo)
A. Within the first two months of the kindergarten year, cognitive, affective, and perceptual-motor skill development related to the basic skills of reading, and math should be inventoried.			X	With development of the management system, this recommendation may be implemented in 1977-78. (Source: Karsten memo)
B. A Profile of Skills folder should be kept for every child in order to provide feedback to parents, information for subsequent teachers, and to show progress at the end of the year toward objectives set in the fall. The skills folder should list individual objectives for the year, with a growth chart on which skills mastered would be checked off.			X	A profile of skills folder related to the new reading system will be used in Title I schools in 1976-77 and may be used in non-Title I schools as well. (Source: Karsten memo)
6. The primary emphasis of the Minneapolis Schools must be placed on achievement rather than on time in basic skills instruction.				
A. Resources must be concentrated on the first five years of the Minneapolis Schools' developmental program. Although there should be no time barriers to progress for the individual child it is expected that most children will have achieved minimum basic skill competence by the end of their fifth year.				No Rating However, a reduction in local funds makes continued implementation difficult. Assistance from outside the school district may be needed for staff inservicing (Source: Karsten memo)
B. Education for mastery of a sequenced set of basic skill objectives should continue past the primary developmental program. Reading and math should be taught until each student has mastered the Minimum Essentials.				(Source: Karsten memo) No Rating
7. The Committee recommends the following, with regard to the reading program of the Minneapolis Public Schools:				
A. A Reading Director should be hired, reporting to the Deputy Superintendent for Planning and Instruction, to give city-wide direction to the system's reading program.			X	Implemented July 1, 1975. However, since re-organization in 1976 there is no designated Reading Director.
B. Phonics must be an integral part of every reading program. Handwriting (cursive writing) must be integrated into the reading curriculum. Teachers must cultivate spelling consciousness in their reading instruction and encourage accuracy in writing.	X			(Source: Vakos memo)
C. The school's resources must be used to encourage every student to read for pleasure.	X			Implementation has already occurred; in addition reading for pleasure will be emphasized in Tuesday released time inservices. (Source: Karsten memo)

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
BASIC SKILLS (continued)				
D. All teachers should prescribe reading materials suited to the student's level of achievement.			X	Inservices are planned at both the elementary and secondary levels to help teachers prescribe reading materials. (Source: Karsten memo)
8. Teachers need better preparation and more assistance if they are to teach all children basic skill competence.				
A. In-service programs should focus on the "how to" of teaching basic skills.			X	Title I inservices have focused on this in the past, and the "how to" of teaching basic skills will be emphasized in inservices planned at the elementary level with the new reading materials. (Source: Karsten memo)
The Minneapolis Public Schools should give preference in its hiring procedure to those who have demonstrated competency in teaching basic skills.				The Personnel Department seeks demonstrated competency in teaching basic skills as a prerequisite for employment in the Minneapolis Public Schools. (Source: Vakos memo) No Rating
B. Clear lines of responsibility must be defined for consultants, generalists and resource teachers who provide direction and assistance to basic skills instruction.	X			The school system is in the process of clarifying lines of responsibility during revamping of the top-level organization of the school system. (Source: Karsten memo)
C. A Curriculum Resource Center should be established in each Area.		X		Because of budget restrictions this has not been implemented. In 1976-77 each Area is consolidating resources in a central location. This may be the beginning of implementation of this recommendation. (Source: Karsten memo)
D. One staff member in each elementary school should be allotted planning time to assist the faculty in developing objectives and assessment procedures.		X		(Sources: Vakos memo and Karsten memo)
E. The use of volunteer tutors should be maximized, particularly in non-Title I schools where paid aides are few.	X			The Coordinator of WISE and GISE works closely with the Reading Director (Source: Karsten memo)
F. The increased emphasis on "mainstreaming" children with special learning problems into regular classes and changes in the functions of SLBP (Special Learning and Behavior Problems) teachers should be carefully examined for their impact on the classroom teacher and on the teaching of basic skills.			X	The SLBP staff and the Reading Director have been consulting on this recommendation. (Source: Karsten memo)
9. Parents should be informed about what to expect from the public schools in basic skills instruction, and about their responsibility throughout the schooling process. Every elementary school should improve communication with parents by distributing a handbook describing school procedures.			X	A special project is planned to implement this recommendation. More specific information is not available because the project is in its initial stages. (Source: Karsten memo)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
BASIC SKILLS (continued)				
10. The Minneapolis Public School system must evaluate the effectiveness of its basic skills programs. The budget must allow for adequate evaluation. Evaluation should include long-range follow-up on students involved in the program. Results should be put to use, or reasons for lack of implementation should be reported.		X		However, evaluations of some Title I basic skills programs have been undertaken. For instance, a long-range follow-up of students in the Basic Skills Centers has been conducted. However, there is little funding with which to conduct evaluation of locally funded basic skills programs. (Source: Research and Evaluation Department)
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES 1973-74 (Presented to the Minneapolis Board of Education June 1974)				
1. Without city-wide goals there is no appropriate basis for developing or evaluating curriculum.				
A. The Committee recommends that city-wide learning goals for students in the Minneapolis Public Schools must be clearly communicated in easily understood language to the school-community.	X			Educational goals of the system adopted by the Board in 1974 (Policy #6110) implemented this recommendation. Also see #6110A and #6200. The Phi Delta Kappa goals rating procedure involved students, staff and the community. Results were disseminated in a report published by the Research and Evaluation Department. (Sources: Board Policies and the Research and Evaluation Department)
B. The Committee recommends that each Minneapolis school should set goals consistent with city-wide goals, and develop program objectives available in writing to the school-community.			X	MPS Board Policy #6210 calls for each school to prepare curriculum goals. Some schools have developed goals for local programs consistent with citywide goals. (Sources: Board Policies and a memo from Bill Phillips to James Small 11/19/74)
2. The local school building is the basic unit for developing curricula according to its own needs and the goals of the Minneapolis Public Schools.				
A. The Committee recommends that every Minneapolis principal designate a Curriculum Leader. In each elementary school, the Curriculum Leader would be a member of the teaching staff, with planning time provided similar to that of a secondary school department chairman. In the secondary school the Curriculum Leader would be a member of the administrative staff with the expertise, time, responsibility and authority to implement the process of ongoing curriculum development and evaluation.		X		The principal in each school is the curriculum leader. (Source: Phillips memo)

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES (continued)				
B. The Committee recommends that an ongoing Curriculum Advisory Committee should be convened by every building principal in the Minneapolis Public Schools. The Curriculum Advisory Committee should consist of a minimum of 15 members, with equal opportunity for membership offered to teachers, school staff, students, parents, and other members of the community at large. The majority of the committee should be other than school personnel. The Curriculum Leader should be a voting member of the Committee.			X	The administration suggests that instead of forming another advisory committee principals should utilize advisory committees established in most schools in recent years as curriculum committees. (Source: Phillips memo) In the 1976 Minnesota Education Bill (House File 1997) districts are urged to form a curriculum advisory committee.
3. K-12 curriculum coordination and teacher support services should be concentrated at the Area level of Minneapolis Public School administration.				
A. The Area Curriculum Generalist should assist the Area Superintendent in his/her tasks of curriculum coordination and planning and, in addition, should serve as administrator of an Area Curriculum Resource Center and as ex-officio member of an Area Curriculum Advisory Council	X			MPS regulation #2400C agrees with this recommendation. (Source: Board Policies)
B. The Committee recommends the establishment of a Curriculum Resource Center in each Area.		X		
C. The Committee recommends the establishment by the Area Superintendent of an Area Curriculum Advisory Council, to operate under the guidance of the Area Curriculum Generalist.	X			(Source: Phillips memo)
4. Essential functions of curriculum coordination, innovation and evaluation must also be performed on a city-wide basis.				
A. The Committee recommends that the Minneapolis Board of Education include in its responsibilities for curriculum development the following:				
1. Periodic review of city-wide goals		X		No Board policy addresses this recommendation. (Source: Board Policies)
2. Assurance that building goals and departmental objectives are geared toward city-wide goals.	X			Addressed by MPS regulation #6110A but not by a Board policy. (Source: Board Policies)
3. Annual Reporting concerning the extent of community and student involvement in curriculum involvement.	X			Contained in annual report from the Area Superintendents. (Source: Phillips memo)
B. The Committee recommends that the responsibilities for curriculum development of the Deputy Superintendent for Planning and Instruction include the following:				
1. Dissemination of state and federal guidelines and curriculum requirements; dissemination of city-wide goals and of organization chart showing assigned responsibilities for curriculum development.	X			(Source: Phillips memo)
2. Development of a testing program which will annually evaluate the extent to which student achievement meets the city-wide goals and objectives within each building.			X	MPS has a citywide achievement testing program. However, it may not adequately measure progress toward educational goals. (Source: Phillips memo)

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES (continued)				
3. Compilation of information concerning student and community reactions to the existing curriculum.				No Rating The Phi Delta Kappa goals rating procedure, which involved students and the community, partially addressed this recommendation. (Source: Research and Evaluation Department),
4. Development of innovative curricula and support services in the central office through the K-12 consultants.	X			(Source: Phillips memo)
5. Equalization of curriculum resources (resource centers and staff, alternative educational programs and special projects) among and within the areas, to the extent possible under guidelines from outside funding agencies. Transfer of students should be facilitated when it is not feasible to maintain equal program opportunities among the areas.	X			Title I, ESEA resources are distributed equally among and within the areas according to the number of disadvantaged students. (Source: Title I Regulations and Guidelines)
6. Implementation of an evaluation program in every building, with broad dissemination of results. Such an evaluation program would follow the pattern established on the senior high school level by the North Central Association, and should accomodate input from staff, laymen and students, as well as from outside educators.		X		However, the Profiles of Performance provides test score information and a description of community factors for each school. (Source: Phillips memo)
7. Compilation of proposals from Area Curriculum Advisory Councils, from the Board of Education, school departments, individual teachers and persons from the community for specific curriculum topics on which there is need for research. Presentation of curriculum research priorities to local colleges and universities or to local task forces. Selected research results should be made available to researchers through the Area Curriculum Resource Center.		X		The Research and Evaluation Department handles MPS research requests and some proposals. Other proposals are handled by the Federal Projects Office. (Source: Research and Evaluation Department)
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION 1974-75 (Presented to the Minneapolis Board of Education May 1975)				
1. The Board of Education should implement a policy stating that members of the community must be involved at each level of school organization in the planning, operation and evaluation of school programs.		X		Board policy #1300, which concerns community participation does not mandate community involvement. (Source: Board Policies)
2. Board of Education regulations should require formation of a council in every school. This council should be made up of a cross-section of persons affected by the educational program of the building: principal, teachers, non-certificated staff, parents, students,--and non-parent community representatives if the council wishes to add them. A. Structuring two-way communication B. Defining and reviewing building goals C. Offering curriculum guidance D. Participating in the budget-making process E. Participating in personnel decisions. F. Contributing to the evaluation process.		X		Board Regulations #1300-1370 do not require that schools have advisory councils. Title I regulations, however, require Parent Advisory Councils in schools receiving Title I funds. (Sources: Board Policies and Title I Regulations and Guidelines)

Appendix D (continued)

Recommendation	Status			Comments
	Implemented	Not Implemented	Under Consideration	
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (continued)				
3. There should be an ongoing city-wide community evaluation process in which all citizens can participate in making informed recommendations about school programs and policies.			X	The Accountability Project was funded by MPS for 1975-76 but funding was discontinued as of June 30, 1976.
4. The Board of Education should create a Student Advisory Board with two members from each junior and senior high school, who will elect two from their membership to attend all meetings of the Board of Education.		X		(Source: Board Policies)
5. The Board of Education should appoint a task force to investigate current conditions within which student government ~~operates~~ in the district's schools.		X		
6. School publications should represent a total picture of what's going on in the schools, including controversial, negative and positive news.				No Rating
7. The members of the Board of Education, as elected community representatives, should develop additional mechanisms to seek community input on major policy changes and should be provided with the resources to respond to community concerns.		X		
8. The Board of Education should recognize the Community Education process as a community participation process for determining educational needs and programs, and should examine and further develop the process to more clearly define the relationship between traditional K-12 educational programs and lifetime educational needs.		X		
9. The Board of Education and administration should actively pursue expansion of public services, in return for monetary compensation, in school buildings where space is available.				No Rating
10. The schools should maximize use of all available community resources. The Board of Education should make available Community Resource Volunteer services throughout the K-12 educational program.		X		Budget cuts in the Community Resource Volunteers Program (CRV) have made it impossible to expand the program. (Source: Betty Jane Reed, CRV Director)

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